

THE PERMANENT CRISIS

WATTMAN

# THE CANADIAN FORUM

*A Monthly Journal of Literature and Public Affairs*



PRICE 25¢ YEARLY 2.00  
Published by J.M. Dent and Sons, Limited  
Aldine House, 224 Bloor St. W. Toronto.

DECEMBER 1931

Vol. XII. No. 135

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# THE CANADIAN FORUM

Vol. XII

TORONTO, DECEMBER, 1931

No. 135

## SUNSHINE AND MOONSHINE

FROM the rock-ribbed coasts of Labrador to the far-flung slopes of the Pacific Shore a paean of prosperity is rising on the air. The chorus is led by our Governor-General, Lord Bessborough, and most of our publicists, politicians, and business leaders are raising their voices in close harmony. In the 'Sunshine Column' of the *Toronto Mail and Empire* is most perfectly reflected the Canadian scene, as observed through the rose-coloured *pince-nez* of the professional optimist, and the columns of many of the *Mail's* contemporaries exhibit the same tendency. For the last two years a number of our public men have been insisting that the depression is purely psychological in nature, and if their contention is warranted it is obvious that nothing more is needed than the right kind of psychology — applied in sufficiently large doses—to restore this fair Dominion to its former unexampled prosperity. So that—given their premises—the carollers are entirely justified in their efforts. Furthermore, there is the accepted legend about drowning men clutching at straws, and to those who are caught in the eddies of the industrial slump every straw must look like a stick of Douglas fir. There are certain definite evidences of improvement—little rays of hope on the economic horizon. Wheat and other grains have risen in price, silver is on the upgrade, and commodity prices generally show a tendency to advance. Our volatile salesmen—who perhaps represent the most articulate class in the community—have readily assumed that the particular department of the Divine Providence which has charge of the material welfare of Canada is once more on the job; that our political, economic, and social systems are fundamentally sound, and all that we have to do is to sit tight and wait for the manna of prosperity to fall in showers from the skies.

## DEBITS AND CREDITS

IT requires a tough mind and a cantankerous disposition to resist the wave of contagious enthusiasm which is sweeping part of our population off its feet. To introduce a discordant note into all this naive and thoughtless harmony is

almost like telling an expectant child on the night before Christmas that Santa Claus does not really exist. Unfortunately this care-free company represents only a small part of our whole community. There are hundreds of thousands of Canadians who have lost faith in Santa Claus and most of the other pleasant myths that have helped in the past to make life a little more comfortable and entertaining. They are being driven to accept a bleaker and more realistic outlook on life by sheer economic necessity. No exact figures are available, but certainly more than a million people—the unemployed, and their dependents—are destitute or on the verge of destitution. The October report on the employment situation, supplied by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics, shows a decline of employment in every province during the month of September, the reduction in Quebec being the most severe. What is more serious is that the graph shows that whereas in the four previous years the normal seasonal drop in employment is most noticeable about the first of December, this year the plunge has started about three months earlier than usual. In most of the key industries production in September shows a marked decline when compared with the same month of last year. The production of iron was reduced by more than half, manufacturing is down 30%, coal down 20%, newsprint down 10%, car loadings down 25%, exports down 30%, and so on. Gold production is up, and also highway construction, but these two items do not weigh very heavily when balanced against the others. A survey of the whole industrial field provides little support for the theory that we have reached the end of the depression.

## EMPLOYMENT PROBLEMS

IF we are to give any consideration to the interests of our whole population, the question whether our trading class is to obtain rather more or rather less profit in the next few months dwindles to one of relative unimportance. Canada, like all other industrial nations that partly depend upon export markets for prosperity, is facing a number of serious problems. If our present system is to achieve even temporary stability these questions will have to be solved—



and they will not be settled by pretending that the problems do not exist. Probably the most serious of these is that of employment. In order to compete with other exporting nations we are obliged to use the most efficient methods of production, and this means the use of more and more large machinery. As we introduce more machinery—both on our farms and in our factories—more workers are thrown out of employment. Three courses are open to us. We can supply new kinds of work for those who have lost their only possession which has any real value—their job. We can support an increasing number of people in involuntary idleness, through a scheme of unemployment insurance. Or, by a reduction in working hours we can divide up all the available work among all the available workers. The third solution is the only one that is sufficiently broad to effect any kind of permanent cure. The difficulty is that the interests of the individual employer are opposed to this remedy. *The Financial Post* has been interviewing a number of 'business leaders' in order to discover their attitude towards curtailed hours and a five-day week. The reply of one 'baking executive' deserves more than passing attention. 'The five-day week is impossible in the baking industry. About a year ago rather than make any reduction in wages we called our men together and decided to eliminate any man that wasn't doing at least 10 hours work a day. The result has been that we have decreased our selling price, decreased our operating cost tremendously and have been able to keep our profits equal to last year.' (*Our italics*).

#### THE CANADIAN PRESS AND THE BRITISH ELECTIONS

THE most depressing feature about the recent British elections was the way in which they were reported by our Canadian newspapers. It is somewhat alarming for anyone who has at heart a continuance of good relations between Canada and Great Britain to observe the violent manner in which most of our papers now take sides on the internal questions of British politics. The same papers would be the first to resent such an attitude on the part of English journalists about our Canadian affairs. But Messrs. Bennett and Ferguson have set the example, and in this last election it was hard to find a Canadian newspaper whose news columns did not preach every day that the salvation of Canada as well as of Britain depended on what the British electors did. Occasional papers like the *Toronto Star* and the *Winnipeg Free Press* who did try to preserve a detached attitude and to remind their readers that there are two sides to every question, even in British politics, were drowned out in the chorus of zealots who were whooping it up for Mr. MacDonald and his saviours of society. There is a representative of the Canadian Press in London, but he apparently interprets his duty of impartiality as limiting him to the superficial news that could be collected by any cub police-court reporter, and he never ventures on any attempt at a realistic analysis of what English politics is all about.

The reason for this almost complete breakdown in efficient newspaper service from England is, of course, the prevailing belief in Canada that only from one party in Britain can we expect any development of Empire trade. But there used to be a time when newspapers considered it their function not to pander to popular delusions but to give the news. We are due for a rude awakening about the English attitude to trade when our two protectionist governments get down to actual bargaining.

#### MISREPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT

NOW that the stupor following upon the hysterical reporting of the British elections by our Canadian newspapers has worn off, let us sum up what really happened in the voting last October. In the 1929 elections Conservative candidates were supported by 8½ million voters, Labour by a little over 8 million and Liberal by 5 million. In 1931 Conservatives won 12 million votes, Labour 7 million and 'National' Liberals 2 million. So that the supposed devastating and final defeat of Labour only amounts to a loss by the party of a little more than a million votes. The electoral overturn was evidently chiefly due to the swing of 3 million Liberal votes to the Conservative side. There have been five elections in Britain since the War—in 1922, 1923, 1924, 1929, and 1931. It is interesting to note that in three of these—1922, 1923 and 1929—the Conservatives won each time just 38 per cent. of the total votes cast. In 1924 their proportion rose to 49 per cent. (though they captured 413 out of 615 seats); and in 1931 to somewhat over half of the total vote, with the result nevertheless that they won 472 out of 615 seats. The 'National' government, with twice as many votes as the Labour opposition, has ten times as many seats.

\* \* \*

THE two occasions on which the Conservatives got more than what seems to be their normal post-war 38 per cent. of the votes were panic elections. In 1924 the panic was produced by the Zinovieff letter and in 1931 by Mr. MacDonald's surrender to the bankers. The exaggerated 'swing of the pendulum,' which in these years gave the Conservatives an enormous membership that they had not earned, gave the same unearned victory to Labour in 1923 and 1929. The only party which has suffered consistently from this absurd single-member constituency system has been the Liberal, though after getting only 59 seats with 5 million votes in 1929 they hold more seats now with only 2 million votes. Naturally the Liberal party has been the only one in Britain to advocate a system of Proportional Representation which would make the seating in Parliament a reflection of the voting in the country. The other two parties prefer to depend upon their luck in the grand national gamble to which every general election is now reduced. The worst evil of the situation is that it invites unscrupulous party managers to invent some spectacular stunt like the Zinovieff letter so that they may sweep the voters off their feet and induce enough of them to change their



votes in order to produce this exaggerated 'swing of the pendulum.' To remind ourselves how similar British politicians are to our Canadian variety, it need only be added that the Proportional Representation Society in Great Britain included among its vice-presidents in 1930 Messrs. Clynes, Graham, Snowden, and Thomas of the Labour party and Mr. Amery, Viscount Burnham, and Viscount Cecil of the Conservatives. Finally, let us not forget that the troupe of fiscal acrobats who now occupy the stage at Ottawa were sent there in July, 1930, by just 49 per cent. of the Canadian electorate.

### SOCIALISM MEANS SOCIALISM

IN its little wilderness on the left hand of Mr. Speaker the wreck of the Labour Party will have ample time to take stock of the situation. It may derive some crumbs of comfort from the fact that the votes of the forces arrayed against Socialism have not increased in number to any appreciable extent since the previous election, but there is another and a more sinister set of figures to explain away after that. Opposition Labour candidates received roughly a million and a quarter less votes in 1931 than in 1929. Taking the other facts and figures of the case into account, that means a million and a quarter abstentions. That means that hundreds of thousands of the old rank and file deliberately held their hand, not, it is safe to suppose, because of any credence placed in the tangled arguments of the Land-of-Hope-and-Glory Government, but because they had lost faith in the leaders of their own party. They were sick of 'Socialism in Our Time' and 'Socialism Now' slogans, of socialist language on the hustings and sickening compromise in office. They were sick of a party that put a few pence on the dole, a few months on the school-leaving age and then sat back in happy contemplation of its navel. There are too many timorous pale pinks in the movement who, like its late leader, Ramsay MacDonald, confuse a gentle humanitarianism and the agility of a tight-rope walker with a militant, positive, political creed. Three of the more notorious have been weeded out, and many more have fallen at the polls. Perhaps the rump will realize that the business of a socialist party is not to bolster up the wreck of capitalism, to take orders from its banks, but, in effect, to realize its own cohesive programme. In other words, Socialism means Socialism, at least to the workers of Great Britain. And perhaps some day it will mean the same to the Labour Party.

### CLAMPING DOWN THE LID

THERE is a more sinister side to the Happy-Days-Are-Here-Again Campaign now blaring forth from the columns of every servile newspaper in the country. It involves the high-handed action of a Department of the Federal Government. Not only, it would appear, are the Canadian public to be fed on carefully peptonized pap regarding the condition of their own country, but they must be carefully shielded from any knowledge regarding more favourable developments in

the Soviet Union. There was a time, a few months ago, when Canadians could hear both sides of the story, for and against, and form their own conclusions. But that is all over. Subscribers to *Moscow News*, to that interesting Russian counterpart of the *Illustrated London News*, *U.S.S.R. in Construction*, and to *Russia Today*, a British publication, have been warned in an official form-letter from their local inspector of Customs that these papers are now banned and that anyone receiving them is liable to prosecution under sections 171-178 of the Customs Act. That lively American radical publication, *The New Masses*, has also fallen under the ban. The tariff on *Ballyhoo* is 15 cents a copy. No wonder, it threatened to compete with the local product.

### THE STUMBLING BLOCK

AMID all the problems which harass the Liberal party at the present time, the problem of Mr. Taschereau is one whose gravity deserves more than passing attention. This tough old warrior, secure in the clear knowledge that the Quebec machine is functioning with unimpaired efficiency, has recently been taking firm stands all over the political lot, and the result continues to be illuminating. It would be a useful exercise for those who are interested in diagnosing the ills of Liberalism to take the recent speeches of the Quebec Premier and see what sort of philosophy of Liberalism could be evolved from them. The result would probably be closer to the creed of Bennett than of Laurier. Mr. Taschereau's pronouncements on the party situation in England, coming from an alleged Liberal, were egregious to say the least. His reiterated attitude on the St. Lawrence scheme—coupled with his actions in regard to Beauharnois—is hardly likely to appeal to the truly Liberal sentiment of the country. Yet the province whose political destinies he controls continues to be the keystone of the Liberal arch in Federal politics, and the fear of losing Quebec is a locked brake on the wheels of a progressive Liberal policy. It is too much to expect that our present crop of politicians should consider for a moment the possibility of balancing the tangible reality of sixty-five Quebec seats against anything so abstract as Liberal principles. Yet until they face this necessity, the sojourn of the Liberal party in valleys of one sort or another is likely to continue indefinitely.

### SABOTAGING THE C.N.R.

THOSE who regard with assured complacency the failure of last session's frontal attack on the Canadian National Railways—if people of such naivety exist—should realize that they have cause to view with grave alarm the more subtle but hardly concealed policy of undermining that has gone on since the session closed. All indications are that the forces opposed to government ownership are strenuously at work, supported to the fullest degree by the existing administration. The joint move of the two railways in the direction of a wage cut is a most dis-

turbing indication. For the past two years the policy of the C.N.R. has been in sharp and disconcerting contrast to that of the C.P.R. Now the disturbing effect of such an intelligent policy is to be removed for the benefit of the private corporation—no doubt to the comfort of many shareholders, but with dubious value to the country at large. The suspension of work on the Montreal terminal is another sign which bodes little good from the point of view of public ownership. But the gravest potential danger lies in the new Commission which is being created to scrutinize the whole question of policy. Appointments have not, at the time of writing, been made to that body, and it would be unfair to criticize it too vehemently in advance. But the policy so far pursued by the existing government leaves room for grave suspicion that further and more disastrous measures of sabotage are on the way. It would be well for the friends of public ownership to realize that they must be prepared for a new and vigorous fight for their cause, otherwise they will awake some fine morning to discover that the cause has been lost beyond recovery.

#### BERTRAND RUSSELL

**B**ERTRAND RUSSELL is going to visit Canada. A great mathematician and logician, he has in recent years been applying his mind to the social problems of our generation; and his writings in this field have shown the same clear sceptical reason combined with the passion of the poet which he used to devote to mathematics. He will hardly, however, win the universal applause which nowadays greets scientists when they take to the lecture platform. For he always makes clear what he is talking about. Two-thirds of the present gushing enthusiasm for science is due to the mystic emotional comfort which literary artists like Jeans and Eddington manage to attach to their expositions of physics and astronomy. We can't follow their mathematics, but they give us the same comfortable feeling about the universe which the Hindu religious fakir induces in the women's clubs at his afternoon-tea lectures. Russell brings no such consolation from his scientific studies. As he remarks in his last book; 'Sir Arthur Eddington deduces religion from the fact that atoms do not obey the laws of mathematics. Sir James Jeans deduces it from the fact that they do. Both these arguments have been accepted with equal enthusiasm by the theologians, who hold, apparently, that the demand for consistency belongs to the cold reason and must interfere with our deeper religious feelings.' In a soft age which flees for refuge from the conclusions of its own reasonings, Bertrand Russell remains our greatest exponent of the gospel of pure reason.

#### A BOUNTY ON HUNTERS

**O**UR readers will be interested to hear that there are good prospects of the Government declaring an open season on hunters. Statistics compiled over a period of years show that this carefully protected species has multiplied so

rapidly that there is a grave danger of overcrowding in its preserves and, worse still, of an actual deterioration of the stock. So lethargic have many specimens become that they appear unable to capture prey by their own efforts and have become parasites upon the success of the more energetic dog. Others have acquired the habit of invading farms and country estates for the sake of the easier killing provided by unsuspecting game to be found there. Consequently many settled districts are complaining loudly of the damage to property and the danger to unarmed persons. With these facts in mind, the Government's conservation experts are urging, as an initial step towards the thinning out of weakly stock, the immediate restoration to the landholder of his ancient right to shoot, 'for his pleasure and profit, on his own fenced property, any hunter found there despite reasonable precautions.' The old-fashioned use of rock salt instead of shot will be recommended as giving equal satisfaction without entailing the labour of burial—hunters, unfortunately, being seldom edible. This move will be followed by a general open season in 1932, but a bounty is not yet being considered. We congratulate the Government on its wise proposal and hope it will not be obstructed by sentimental humanitarians.

#### A. J. McPHAIL

**T**HE death of Mr. A. J. McPhail is a blow to the whole West and especially to his own province of Saskatchewan. He had devoted the last ten years of his life to official service of his fellow-farmers, first as Secretary of the Saskatchewan Grain Growers and then as President of the Saskatchewan Wheat Pool and head of the Central Selling Agency of the three Prairie Pools. Quiet and reserved by nature, he had none of the easy glibness which leads so many so-called farm leaders into politics; but he had won the confidence both of the farmers and of the financial organizations with whom they had to do business. Saskatchewan, which is the premier agricultural province in the West, has shown in recent years a strange inability to produce outstanding leaders in her farm movements. The most discouraging thing in her present situation is not the crop failure or the crash in wheat prices but the seeming lack of young men to carry on the work begun by the early Grain Growers. She can ill afford to lose McPhail.



## THE PERMANENT CRISIS

By UPTON SINCLAIR

I GO out on my front porch at six o'clock in the morning, and sit in the Southern California sunshine which we so like to advertise, even in July. I pick up my morning newspaper, and read that the farmers in Kansas are refusing to take twenty-four cents per bushel for their wheat, and are letting it rot on the ground; also that the owners of some thousands of oil wells in Kansas are shutting them down. I read that there is a Communist riot in Los Angeles, and a Negro Communist riot in Alabama; and I read that Germany is facing a bank panic, that the Chinese are carrying on a war against the 'Reds,' and that in Britain the number of unemployed has been increasing yearly for ten years. And while I am reading all this, there arrives a boy on a motorcycle, bringing me a special delivery letter from a young man with whom I used to play tennis. A few years ago this man lived in an expensive home and drove a good car; now he tells me that his wife has only seven cents, and he is sending her one dollar, which is all he has.

Many persons offer us counsel in these troubles. We listen to the advice of business leaders and economists, who, early in 1929, were assuring us that America had achieved a permanent solution of the industrial problem; there was a 'new Capitalism,' based upon mass production, high wages, and stock ownership by employees, so hard times could never again trouble America. Our government is in the hands of men who assured us, in the fall of 1929, that the Wall Street panic was quite insignificant, and would have no effect upon industry; and who, during the past twenty-one months, have been assuring us regularly every month that prosperity was only two or three months away.

In asking you to hear my comments on the crisis, I present a different set of credentials. In the year 1907 I published a book, *The Industrial Republic*, in which I pictured this crisis in all its details, and explained the causes and the cure. In 1922 I published *The Book of Life*, in which the predictions were repeated. In 1925 I published *Letters to Judd*, covering the ground a third time, and so thoroughly that in reprinting the book year after year, I do not have to change a word—it is always up to date!

The essential fact about the modern business crisis is that it occurs in the midst of plenty. In backward countries, such as India and China, there may be a scarcity of products; but in the great industrial countries the trouble is caused by too much of everything. The farmers are bankrupt because they have produced too much grain; the weavers are in rags because they have produced too much cloth; the children of the shoe-workers are barefoot because their fathers have made too many shoes. We Socialists upon soap-boxes ring endless changes upon this strange paradox; in our efforts to make it real we picture a man from Mars, or a cannibal from the South Seas, or a

monkey from the jungle, arriving in one of our great cities, and having these matters explained to him, and breaking into exclamations as to the craziness of what is called 'civilization.'

The best simile for what has happened is that of a poker-game. As you know, men sometimes play all day and most of the night; I did it myself a few times in my youth before I learned better. The 'runs of luck' are bound to equalize themselves in the end; assuming, of course, that the game is a fair one, and the players equally skilful. But suppose the cards are marked; then one individual will be permanently successful, and sooner or later will have all the chips. Then you will see what I call the 'permanent crisis'; the game will come to an end, because one side has no more to win and the other side has no more to lose.

In the great gambling game of business competition the cards have been marked and the dice have been loaded in favour of the big banking and industrial interests. They have known what was coming; they have been 'insiders' in speculation, and have had sufficient reserves of money to tide them over difficulties; also, to manipulate markets and produce the results upon which they bet. We have a class of persons, perhaps a million or so, who have comfortable incomes guaranteed them; and, on the other hand, we have tens of millions in families of which the breadwinners are out of work, and therefore cannot buy anything. In *Letters to Judd* I define the word 'consumer': 'If you've got the price, you're a consumer; if you haven't got the price, you're a bum.'

\* \* \*

THE privileged class are sitting back, waiting for the hard times to pass. It is annoying to them, of course, that there are no profits to be made. For example, I know here in Southern California a retired capitalist who had the wit to see what was coming and sold out in time. He has large sums in the bank—he does not tell me just how much. He is bored, because the great poker game is stalled, and he cannot find any way to make money. He has looked over this field and that, but in vain. So he takes trips to the beach, and plays around with his children and grandchildren, and waits for 'things' to start up again.

It is for persons such as this, who have money enough to supply their needs, that industry is still going on. It is for these and their families and pensioners that our steel mills are working at 35% capacity—to provide them with new automobiles, and golf clubs, and other means of relieving boredom. All their servants are employed, and all those who wait upon the servants—those who transport food, and keep clothing-stores, and perform the other tasks needed to keep a portion of the community in comfort, and a still larger portion on the ragged edge. The rich are persuaded that charity is a form of insurance, so



there are bread lines; thus more work is furnished for those who transport flour and make bread.

The obvious cause of this paradox of starvation in the midst of plenty is that those who do the work and produce the goods do not get the money to buy the goods. At least they get only part of the money, and so can buy only part of the goods; they do not get *all* the money, so they cannot buy *all* the goods. The means of creating wealth increase faster than the market for that wealth; so the surplus wealth and the power of producing it is stored up, while those who would like to have the goods are powerless to buy them, and have to be turned out of work until the surplus has been consumed.

\* \* \*

THROUGHOUT our industrial history these crises have come every few years. The machinery slows down until the surplus is used, and then the machinery starts again, and we have good times. Such is the 'business cycle,' and our economists are compiling figures, and preparing charts, and predicting the customary revival. Six months ago I was talking with a New Yorker temporarily sojourning in Hollywood. Wall Street had 'cleaned him out' in the recent panic, and now, he was saying, if only he had some money to buy U. S. Steel, which was so certain to go up! I said to him: 'Where is this revival coming from? It means that we have to find customers for our goods; and who is going to buy them? Will it be the Germans, with money we loan them? Will it be the Russians, with money we won't loan them? Will it be England, with her permanent hard times? Will it be the revolting Hindus, or the starving Chinese?' My friend took a thought-journey over the world, and in the end admitted that he didn't know where it was coming from. The other day I met him again and he said, 'You were right; it didn't come as fast as I thought; but I wish I had some money to buy U. S. Steel now!'

The prophets of prosperity have all the precedents on their side. Things always have 'come back.' We would wait until the new harvest came in, and then the farmers would have money to buy manufacturers' goods. But look at the farmers this time! The Farm Board set out to save them last fall, and now it has two hundred million bushels of wheat on its hands, and that wheat is like the sword of Damocles hanging over the farmers' heads. The grain elevators are clogged with it, and so this year's crop is left to rot on the ground; the market price is half the cost of production.

I remember when I was a boy reading a joke which made a deep impression on my mind. One farmer remarked to another, 'How lucky the Russian wheat crop failed!' The other replied, 'Seems most like an act of Providence, don't it?'

This year Providence has overlooked the farmers of America. The Russians, with their new system, planted five million acres a day, and increased their acreage 10% over last year. This fall Soviet Russia will come on the world's market with some hundreds of millions of bushels of new wheat. They have increased their cotton acreage

by 60%—and what is that going to do to relatives of mine in the far South who live by growing cotton? Last year they borrowed fifty thousand dollars from the banks, and when the crop was ready it was worth just half that. The banks forced them to sell—and even so the banks went to the wall. Now my relatives have borrowed money from the Farm Loan banks, and have another crop of cotton ripening in the Mississippi sunshine. What chance do they stand to get back its cost?

You see, this crisis is a world-wide one, and it is equally severe in both agriculture and manufacturing. In the old days there were two men in a boat, and when one fell into the water, the other pulled him out; but now they are both in the water—and the boat is on the way to the bottom.

Our economists and statesmen, and other master-thinkers, come forward with various remedies. First, let there be a Federal Reserve system, to help the big business men over the panics. That worked beautifully, for the big business men, and for a time. Then, the farmers didn't see why they shouldn't have a share of this protection, and so there are the Farm Loan banks. The effects of both systems is to enable producers to go on producing goods beyond the market demand—and so to render the final situation worse than ever. The ultimate end is bankruptcy, first for the borrower, and then for the lender. You can see how it worked out in Germany; for that has been the German system of staving off the crisis. Borrow money from America, and pay back part of it as interest on the debts, and use the rest to finance public works, and thus keep the unemployed from going Communist.

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IN the old days nations went to war, and conquered one another's territory, and exterminated or enslaved the population, and took the land for their own. But now the world has moved into the period of capitalism, and we do not exterminate or enslave our enemies; we put them to work to pay interest on reparation bonds; and when they go bankrupt and can no longer pay this interest—then we see a strange development, never known before in the history of the world. We see all the statesmen and bankers from the proud conqueror nations running in a panic to a conference, to devise ways and means of keeping the conquered nation from going into bankruptcy!

The reason is this: we conquerors hold billions in reparation bonds in our own banks; or rather, the banks have unloaded them on the public, and know that if the payments are defaulted the owners of the bonds will come running to the banks to draw out money. Thus the capitalist system has become one tangled web throughout the whole world; and we cannot permit it to fail anywhere—we cannot even permit it to threaten to fail, or to look as if it might be going to fail. The modern world is doing 98% of its business on credit, and threat of failure can wipe out more values in one business day than all the fires that have ever burned and all the earthquakes that have ever shaken since the dawn of history.

Another factor which never existed in the world before: throughout all the other panics it was possible to let the unemployed starve, and all you had to do was to order out the militia and shoot a few of them, and the rest would crawl back into their kennels; but now by some means, in spite of all the capitalist editors and professors of economics, the poor have managed to find out about the cause of the crises, and the remedy. Of course there have always been soap-boxers and utopian dreamers with whiskers and long hair, calling for a new deal; but now there is something different—a working-class insurrection which has got control of one-sixth of the land surface of the globe, and of the labour of a hundred million workers. They are doing the thing which all our editors and professors of economics have been vowing for a hundred years could never be done: they are producing for use instead of for profit. They are making one of the poorest nations of the earth into one of the richest. They are abolishing unemployment—and even giving employment to skilled workers from capitalist America! Even faster than we are sliding down, they are climbing up.

And furthermore, the workers of the world are finding out about this! In spite of all the press bureaux maintained in Riga and Warsaw for the purpose of collecting and distributing unfavourable reports about Russia, the word is spreading that farmers do not have to starve because they have produced too much wheat, and that weavers do not have to go in rags because they have produced too much cloth. So it comes about that statesmen and bankers in Paris and London, Washington and New York, are all running to a rupt! They have learned that if a modern country goes bankrupt, it also goes Bolshevik: the one thing they cannot permit to happen.

\* \* \*

THE conference in London is assembling, and I venture to prophesy that when I pick up my newspaper from the front porch a few days from now, I shall read that the New York bankers, with the endorsement of Washington officials, are arranging for a large loan to Germany. That is the news we shall read continuously during the death-throes of the capitalist system. New York bankers, with the endorsement of Washington officials, will be lending large sums of money to some new country which has made the discovery that in order to get new loans from America, all you have to do is to threaten to go bankrupt, and to point out that bankruptcy means Bolshevism. The great 'Uncle Shylock,' as they have come to call us, has staked his life upon the existence of capitalism, and capitalism is fighting Bolshevism throughout the world. It dares not fight with physical force, because it learned in 1919 and 1920 that Bolshevik propaganda makes headway in its armies and navies, and leads to mutinies of British troops embarking at Folkestone, and of French sailors in the Black Sea fleet, and of Michigan lumbermen serving in the American Expeditionary Force at Archangel. So, for the present at any rate, world capitalism

will fight Bolshevism with the purse of America.

Germany has a huge war debt, and must pay the interest. Germany cannot pay in gold, because its gold is nearly exhausted, and without any gold its currency would be worthless, and its people would go Bolshevik. Germany cannot pay in goods, because that would throw out of work additional millions in Britain and France and America, and these unemployed millions would go Bolshevik. So Germany must pay with credit, which we provide for the purpose. During the balance of the death-throes of world capitalism, American bankers will sell German bonds to the American public, and will credit the money to Germany; whereupon Germany will instruct the bankers to use the money to pay the interest on the outstanding bonds. The bankers, of course, will take commissions on both transactions; and when the public has got used to the procedure, we shall see it applied with Austria, and Hungary, and Poland, and Roumania, and Czechoslovakia, and all the other struggling countries which need to be saved from Bolshevism.

You see here the perfect picture of the poker-game. Germany has lost her chips. America has won most of them. So the only way the game can go on is for America to lend some chips to Germany, for Germany to play with. For the rest of capitalist existence, we shall see Germany borrowing chips, and America winning them back, and chalking up a new 'I. O. U.' on the score.

In the meantime, Russia is going ahead with her Five-Year Plan. While American steel production is held down to 35% of normal, Russia is increasing hers at the rate of 35% per year. While the American Farm Board is urging our farmers to cut down their acreage by 20%, Russia is increasing hers at the rate of 10% a year. Next year the enormous Dnieprostroy dam begins producing power, and about it will be centered the greatest complex of industrial plants in the world. There is no need to go into details about this—a dozen books about the Five-Year Plan have been published in America this year, and you can read any one of them. Russia started a thousand years behind the United States, and in another ten years will have caught up.

Perhaps by that time we shall have passed through another cycle, and be ready for another spell of hard times. Or perhaps—I do not pretend to say which—we may do as England has done, and have a continuous spell of hard times, getting harder through a period of ten years. Which-ever happens, this is certain: capitalism means crises of deepening intensity, while Socialism means prosperity expanding without hitch. When the Russian worker has built up his industrial plant, he is not out of a job like the American worker, but is on a vacation. The difference between unemployment and vacation is very simple: while you are unemployed your salary stops, and you cease to be a 'consumer'; but while you are on vacation it continues, and you consume.

Picture, if you can, the situation which we are going to see in a few years, all along the western border of Soviet Russia. On the one side will be enormous cooperative farms, worked by the most

modern machinery, with cooperative workers producing food in such quantities that meals are free to all who have work-cards, because it no longer pays to do the clerical labour of keeping track of them. On the other side of the border will be peasants living in the filth and degradation of a thousand years ago, at the mercy of weather and crop pests and landlords; seeing their grain taken away from them for taxes, or seeing its value vanish before they can get it to market. Do you not realize how, in the face of such a contrast, the old peasant system of Europe is due for a crash?

I will be tactful, and say nothing about the old peasant system of America; about tenant farms, and mortgaged farms, and farms sold to the State for taxes. Already I note that the farmers of Kansas are talking about 'moratoriums.' The word has been cabled from Berlin—so quickly does infection spread in these modern times! Already our government is explaining to our farmers that they have to give up the world-market, and confine their hopes to our own country, which can consume only half of this year's crop!

Also, I will be very cautious in pointing out what the farmers and workers of America could do if they should decide to take our machinery of production and put it to work, not for the profit of private owners, but for the use of all. If I were to say that the American farmer and the American workingman could produce by two or three hours' work per day the equivalent of \$5,000 a year income for every man, woman and child in the country—I should only be repeating what I have said every year for the past twenty-eight years, and what other Socialist writers have been saying for twice as long. But you have always refused to believe it, and you may have to wait until you see it actually happening in Russia.

I suppose your patriotic pride will force you to admit it then. Not even the most reactionary editor or professor of economics will deny that if the Russians are able to do it, the Americans will also be able to do it! But, of course, we must let the Russians do it first. Never would it do for Americans to show that they can discover something new, and teach the rest of the world about progress!

### TREES IN ICE

These gaunt prongs and points of trees  
pierce the zero air with flame  
every finger of black ice  
stealing the sun's drawn fire  
to make a burning of a barren bush  
underneath  
from still branch and arm  
flakes of light fall  
flecking the dark white snow  
this cruelty is a formal loveliness  
on a tree's torn limbs, this glittering pain is  
beauty

without flaw.

F. R. SCOTT.

### FIDELIA VULNERA AMICI

**I**F to a human head a horse's neck  
Your painter sets, proceeding thence to deck  
With various plumes a motley lot of limbs  
Cribbed from whatever walks, or crawls, or  
swims,

Till in a filthy fish the mixture ends,  
Could you refrain a gross guffaw, my friends?  
What of a Beaver, then, with budding mane  
That still he coaxes and pommades in vain,  
While fluffy feathers, the uncivil things,  
Insist to clothe his flapping paws in wings;  
Who ponders on his own ambiguous tail,  
'Is that a tuft, a feather, or a scale?'  
And like some baffling beast that dies in dreams,  
Roars like a lion, like an eagle screams?  
Thrice happy beast, if ever he could find  
A way to know, or guess at, his own mind!

Well, let us help him. 'Tis a pious task  
For Beaver-corpuscles. First then, we'll ask  
What's our ambition? Why, we aim to be  
The Empire's, nay, the whole world's granary.  
A lofty mark, i'faith; to find our place  
Just in the belly of the human race.  
Nor even there securely. Ah, the blest  
Simplicity of our agrarian West!  
What though poor silly Nature failed to grant  
Complete monopoly in the precious plant?  
We borrow Nelson's telescope, and still  
Maintain with dogged syllogistic skill,  
'Wealth springs from labour; man's a kind of  
meat;

All flesh is grass: therefore, all wealth is wheat.'  
And if it were, what help were that to us,  
Who frame our foreign commerce, roughly thus:  
The right hand asks a price that none will pay;  
The left hand pushes proffered trade away?

What then? Our glory goes no further deep  
Than roots of grass? Why, not at all; we keep  
A second barrel still to shoot at fate.  
Is not that happy land supremely great  
Which with the wealth of fertile fields combines  
The inexhaustible riches of her mines  
—Which yet, perhaps, may last her buccaneers  
With luck, a matter of some thirty years.  
There lies the wealth. Root it out all at once.  
So we be fat, the devil take our sons!

Had we so little time, so little faith,  
To think the land must die with our own death?  
Must we leave nothing? Did we reckon then  
Ourselves to be the very last of men?  
Slow grows the oak; the lank and sappy weed  
Shoots limply up with true Canadian speed.  
We have no time, we have no time to grow  
Well-knit, broad-shouldered, vigorous, and slow;  
We must have Immigrants, that we may sprout  
Into a lubberly long anaemic lout;  
Nor ask, what did the Dinosaur gain  
Whose body grew so far beyond his brain?

Say, what remains when mines and forests go  
The way of beaver, and the buffalo?  
Though we renew the woods, restock the lakes,  
Where shall we find the magic art that makes  
An emptied earth put forth her wealth again?  
Our rude forefathers, unenlightened men,



Honoured him most who most with armed hand  
Ruined and spoiled their hapless neighbours' land;  
But we, most infinitely wiser grown,  
Adore him most who most despoils our own.  
And lest too slow ourselves our wealth should waste,

Still bawl and bray, in desperate haggard haste,  
Calling the carrion crows of all the earth  
To gut the unhappy land that gave us birth.

We could have kept our hands from this foul stain,

Have cleared the forest, duly tilled the plain,  
And worked the mine, to fill our daily need,  
In reverence, in worship, not in greed;  
Who now, to bring our swollen pride to birth,  
Lay impious hands upon our mother Earth,  
And blind with selfish lust, from shore to shore,  
Ravish her crudely, like a hired whore.

And what's our gain? (a), the familiar curse  
Of unemployment; (b)—and rather worse—  
Employment, in conditions that reflect  
Small enough credit on our self-respect.  
Smug squint-eyed slavery, that lays a stain  
Less on our heart, perhaps, than on our brain:  
Our brain, that shuts its eyes to evidence,  
Defies all life, all history, all sense,  
And worships as divine eternal truth  
An economic system, rude, uncouth,  
Wasteful, unjust, unhealthy, that can boast  
A few poor hundred years of life at most,  
When men, except an odd old-fashioned few  
Forgot the simple truth that once they knew,  
Honoured the giver less than him that lends,  
And set the means of life above the ends.

What can we do about it? We may shift  
At least, our form of servitude, may lift  
Our masters' boot-heels from our country's neck  
—And place our own there—at the least, may check

This reckless fever of the childish few  
That strip our wealth, and know not what they do.  
Where lies the gain, if Parliaments control  
Production, Distribution,—and the Dole?

In this, most likely: that their hands are free  
For general action; when they disagree  
(As, if the gods be good, they mostly will)  
For general inaction, better still.

No greater blessing, but a less offence;  
Folly inactive, oft resembles sense.

'So then,' says one, 'your timorous counsel ends  
'In sordid poverty?' Not at all, my friends.  
I know the truth the Grecians understood—  
'How hardly shall a poor man's life be good.'  
I never claimed that famine fostered health,  
And still the best manure of Art is Wealth.  
I but suggest the interests of the land  
Might prosper more, more generally planned,  
That we might put our corporate brains to use  
Settling how much, and what, we shall produce,  
Not bolt, like Lazarus in the holy fable,  
The random crumbs from Dives' vulgar table.  
I but suggest Ambition shift his goal  
Sometimes, from body's growth to growth of soul,  
Who now, poor thing, is squashed most sadly flat  
Under a jellyish mound of muscled fat.

We have yet a chance to stand in the world's eyes

For something more than silly wealth or size;  
But these we stress so much, men have forgot,  
Almost, whether we have a soul or not,  
Seeing us to some Moloch-god of Matter  
Offer our own fat head on a shallow platter.

But stay, abandoned critic! Dost not know  
How fair a spiritual light we throw?  
See where three thousand thousand paces shine  
Of open, unbesoldiered border-line!  
Noble, begad! I never heard the ant  
Kept up a guard against the elephant.

The generous Lamb wipes a fraternal tear,  
And comforts Neighbour Lion not to fear.  
Inspiring sight! and inexpensive, too:  
But let the credit go where credit's due.  
We have our faults; but one we ne'er display  
—Too tender justice to the U.S.A.

Poor wildered cousins! whom we fear, and hate,  
And envy, and insult, and imitate.

And yet, towards England, our affection mocks  
The wit with more ingenious paradox.

Fondly we cherish her, in filial pride,  
So long as all the profit's on our side.

We seek her marts—but Lord, the unholy fuss  
If ever she presumes to trade with us!—

And generously make good our loyal vaunts  
Offering her everything but what she wants.

Yet one commodity with no thought of price  
We lavish—tons on tons of good advice:

And Grandma, tugging slyly at our legs  
Demurely learns the art of sucking eggs.

... At that, she might pick up, by paying heed,  
Some rather useful dodges: and indeed  
I'd rather be, begging the Wheat Pool's pardon,  
The world's schoolmaster than its kitchen-garden.

L.A.M.





EVERYONE remarks in these days on the strange eagerness of Canadians to discuss and criticize their economic institutions. Even in a place like Toronto the atmosphere is electric with ideas, and that in spite of the remarkable and sudden cessation of interest on the part of the daily papers in the Russian Five-Year Plan. During the past few months there have occurred the two Newmarket conferences which are perhaps a symptom of something stirring on the Ontario countryside. Some optimists go so far as to think that something might happen even in the U.F.O. And, most significant of all straws in the wind, the circulation of THE CANADIAN FORUM keeps on going steadily up.

Perhaps the most striking phenomenon of all is that our preachers of the Christian gospel are becoming openly interested in social and economic issues. In all other countries this, of course, happened years ago; and one would be a little more convinced of the reality of the interest in Canada if the clergymen who show leanings toward social reform were not so frequently importations from England. Still we have got so far as discussing whether clergymen should discuss economics. A system of society of which the mainspring is self-interest obviously cannot be expected to result in consequences which are acceptable to the Christian conscience. That being so, it is a little difficult to see how a Christian minister can avoid being a critic of the existing competitive system. For the preacher who does not discuss social and economic questions is taking sides by his silence just as much as his brother who speaks out. The man who thinks that current problems do not need to be discussed by Christians has lined himself up as a defender of the *status quo*, and is as much a partisan on one side as the zealot who maintains that Christianity implies socialism is on the other side. All the same, we have undoubtedly gone a long way in Canada when these economic questions get into the Church. One of these days they will get into the theatre also. Some budding Hart House dramatist will write an Ibsenite tragedy on Canadian social conditions; and then at last we shall be right up to where England was in the early 1890's.

\* \* \*

IT was in the 1890's that the Labour movement appeared in English politics and provided a nucleus about which advanced social reformers of all kinds tended more and more to group themselves. In Canada the present weakness of radicalism is clearly due to the lack of some such nucleus. The individual uncoordinated expressions of protest or criticism which one hears everywhere from professors, clergymen, farmers, and trade unionists produce little result with us because the individuals and scattered groups

whose opinions they represent have not got together in support of any definite concrete policy. The political Labour movement in England arose from the junction of two forces, first the organized trade unions of workers, and secondly the groups of bourgeois intellectuals who had abandoned early nineteenth century *laissez-faire* ideas and were calling upon the organized community, based upon a democratic electorate, to correct the evil results of unregulated competition. Of these latter groups the most important was the Fabian Society. The Fabians, led by Mr. Shaw, have been the most skilful advertisers that modern England has produced; and the version of English social history which they have now made orthodox by dint of constant repetition, which is to the effect that they supplied the ideas and the trade unions supplied the votes, will not bear much detailed examination by the historian. The truth is that the Fabians learnt as much from the workers as they taught them. Still it is undeniable that the English working class movement would not play the part in the community that it has played in our generation had it not been for the long tradition of cooperation with it established by bourgeois sympathizers from the days of Lord Shaftesbury to those of the London School of Economics.

\* \* \*

IN Canada, though we boast of our freedom from class divisions, the movements of our industrial workers or of our farmers owe little to the white-collar classes. We have had, indeed, one outstanding exception to this rule. Goldwin Smith gave freely both of his money and of his literary skill to help Ontario farmers. Who would dream, turning over the dreary pages of the *Farmer's Sun* of today, that they were once adorned by the regular column of the Bystander? But then, Goldwin Smith was an Englishman. Nothing so clearly reveals his failure to become really acclimatized in Canada as the fact that he should have thought it worth his while to spend the last years of his life trying to put ideas into the seemingly impenetrable skulls of Ontario farmers. No true Canadian would have been so lacking in an eye for the main chance as to have wasted his time in any such self-imposed Sisyphean task.

Our Canadian intellectuals have only once tried, as such, to make an impression upon Canadian public affairs. That was at the time of the Canada First movement. And the history of Canada First supplies a useful lesson on what is wrong with Canadian intellectuals today. Foster and his friends had shared joyfully in the surge of national enthusiasm which marked the founding of the new Confederation, and they wanted to make something of it before Canadian public life sank back once more into the old rut of party politics. But they were never able—or never willing—to define in concrete terms what particular expressions of the national spirit they wished to encourage. Did Canada First mean nativism or protectionism or merely a new party or what? The nearest they came to a definition of their aims was in their attempt to embody their ideas in an individual, Edward Blake, 'the child of promise

and morning star of that time.' But Blake failed them. So they gradually declined into stimulating but undirected talk; and the net result of their efforts was to leave a noble name to be vulgarly exploited by a skilful campaign manager in our own day.

\* \* \*

**F**ARMER and labour movements in Canada have still a long way to go before they reach the point attained by the English working classes in the 1890's. When English Labour went into politics it had behind it fifty years' experience in large-scale economic organization. The workers in their trade unions and co-ops had learned how to act together, how to produce leaders out of their own ranks, and how to deal with their employers on terms of equality. This indispensable experience is still to a considerable extent lacking among the classes who must form the backbone of any left-wing movement in Canada. In the East our farmers are still obstinately individualist, and all the exploitation to which they have been subjected by city middlemen has not yet taught them the lesson of combination. They will not organize and they will not stick to one another. As for Labour, it is torn by sectarian disputes, and too many of its leaders seem more intent on giving another illustration of the dissidence of dissent than in achieving anything practical to protect the interests of the working class as a whole.

Yet things do move even in Canada. Our Western farmers have shown their determination to remain loyal to their organization in the face of what is almost disaster. And the stupid and panic-stricken policy of repression which is being resorted to by our Tory governments in the Dominion and the Provinces may make even the warring sects of Labour see the value of union. When the English Fabians began to pamphleteer in the 1880's there was as yet no sign that in ten years they would be in the thick of a political movement which would produce the modern Labour party. The time is ripe for a Canadian Fabian Society to organize itself, define its aims, and start campaigning, even if only on such a moderate programme as would correspond to the gas and water socialism of the original Fabians.

\* \* \*

**W**HEN Alice came out of the Duchess' kitchen she ran into the Cheshire Cat. 'Cheshire Puss,' she began, 'would you tell me please which way I ought to walk from here?' 'That depends a good deal on where you want to get to,' said the Cat. 'I don't much care where,' said Alice. 'Then it doesn't matter which way you walk,' said the Cat. '—So long as I get somewhere,' Alice added as an explanation. 'Oh, you're sure to do that,' said the Cat, 'if you only walk long enough.' The trouble with most of us professed radicals in Canada is our feeling that we're sure to get somewhere if we only keep on talking long enough. It is time for us to consider where we want to get to. The only practical alternative to

this, after two years of world depression, is to join the sunshine boys of our daily papers, to shout 'happy days are here again,' and to rush off and consult our favourite broker.

F.H.U.

## CLIMACTERIC

I feel that way: come near me not until  
The period sees a change and makes me still  
Aware of consciousness of nerves of life;  
I'm on my throne, alone, not to be sought  
By anything: aloof, without a thought  
Of mixing blood and thus creating strife.

Turn back your head with its too febrile eyes;  
They might much more for their good weal devise  
Another way of moving me to melt.  
I feel that way: stir not a nothing's length  
Lest in your lack of progress all your strength  
Exhaust itself for when it should be felt.

Those channels in me close out all you give,  
As locked are they as are my wants to live  
By forces rising from your soul and core.  
The elements, the winds shall be my wafts,  
No thinking thing shall imbue me with  
draughts,—  
I feel that way, from heart to gland and pore.

The biscuit of all chastity I eat,  
How saccharine it tastes—how musty meat!  
The breezes, skies, the pollen I shall mother.  
Your carnal appetites of yesterday  
Must now be swallowed up—I feel that way:  
Attach them for the present to another.

\* \* \*

Lift up that face of agony, of shame,  
And live and sigh, for now I must declaim  
That suddenly I seem to feel your spray;  
To me an ardour comes, and given glow,  
Resuscitates, and sets my streams aflow:  
Unfold those arms, for now I feel that way!

RAYMOND I. DIAMOND

## THE HADLEYBURG HOME GUARD

Give them a monument all to themselves,  
A forty-foot shaft of solid brass.  
They could not march to the battle-front  
To breast the bullets and shells and gas.

They were mostly women or grave trustees,  
But their tongues were slick and busy and  
biting,  
And they kept the war up thirteen years  
After the rest of the world quit fighting.

MARJORIE MCKENZIE



## PRINTED AND MADE IN CANADA

By J. KEMP WALDIE

### II

THE type used in most Canadian books suffers from two obvious defects: it is ugly and it is illegible. The primary cause of these defects is a carelessness we are surprised to find surviving in an industry suffering from severe internal competition, until we are even more surprised to learn that the competition consists, not in attempting to do anything better than anyone else, but in trying to do it cheaper, no matter what the consequences to the printer and his equipment. For this reason Canadian printers are producing inferior work from the same typesetting machines which are making the acknowledgedly superior books of other countries, and are printing mediocre type on presses which adequate cost-accounting should have written off long ago.

This competition leads to the great American nostrum, haste, — not well-thought-out, efficient celerity, but rushing for its own sake. From this arises the unpleasant irregularity caused by pages of grey and speckled type facing pages overly black. Such varying 'colour' is partly due to lack of attention to inking, but mainly to a complete disregard of the only detail of human control left by type-setting machines, that is the mixture of lead, tin, and antimony which is cast into type; the optimum proportions vary greatly according to the machine, leaving the operator a wide range for experimentation, in which the wrong proportions produce speckled letters with a greyish appearance. Thoughtless hurrying, again, leads to piling the wet pages too high as they come off the press until the accumulating weight causes the ink of the lower leaves to offset—print—onto the facing leaf. Publishers, brazenly or carelessly, issue books with these defective pages in which we can as easily read page three on page one as in its proper place.

Spare Cassius thoughtfully remarked that 'The fault . . . is not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings.' It is unfair to blame the printer whose duty it is to be the servant of the public and whose work through the past five hundred years has consistently reflected the life of his times and countries. Yet it may reasonably be complained that the basic faults of Canadian books comprise the beliefs that any type will do for any work; that anyone can decide, without previous study, which type is most beautiful and which most legible; that it does not destroy the effect of a type if it is indefinitely enlarged or contracted, or if it is compressed to fit the exigencies of machine or hasty setting; and finally that, for some inexplicable reason, it is impossible to do successfully today what was somehow easy in the past.

A rough description of two main type families may aid the consideration of standards of legibility and ideals of beauty.

All Canadian books are printed in roman type with italic as an auxiliary. For convenience the

roman types may be arbitrarily divided into 'old style' and 'modern.' The former is not an early style and the latter far from new: 'old style' was first used in 1495 and flourished in its early forms until about 1670 as well as for a brief period around 1720; it has been enjoying an increasingly successful revival since about 1870. 'Modern' was evolved from earlier forms during the closing years of the eighteenth century, reached its peak during the first half of the nineteenth century and is generally misused today.

In general appearance 'old style' is a black, roundish, generously proportioned letter of strong, workmanlike face; actually it is the type which is so ordinary that you read a whole book in it without noticing the details of a single letter, obviously an ideal state of affairs! In 'old style' the contrast between the thick and thin lines in each letter is at a minimum and the serifs are short and blunt. (Serifs are the cross strokes at the ends of unconnected lines: thus on this 'm' the serifs are what look like the little feet on which it stands and also the line off to the left from the top left hand corner). In this style the weight is evenly distributed. (You will see by looking at a 'd' here that the curved line thickens towards the middle of the curve; if this thickening were higher or lower or extended further it would change the 'weight' of the letter). The letters are rounder than in other styles and more extended than in 'modern'; that is, they have not a pinched, crowded look and take more room on the line than others.

In the days of 'old style's' pristine glory, roughly 1499 to 1550, publishers did not consider it necessary to fool the public into thinking it was getting longer books than it did by spacing the words and lines far apart, and so the type was 'set solid,' producing a beautiful page of even blackness surrounded by well-proportioned margins, with the practical advantage added to its beauty that the pages were easier to read because the eyes were not dazzled or checked by 'rivers' of white meandering through the text.

With improvements in inking and printing, lighter thinner lines could be used in letters, and with the change of fashion to a smoother paper narrow letters were developed with extreme contrasts between the thick and thin strokes and with the serifs elongated and thinned to hair lines. This was 'modern' which was in its heyday during the first quarter of the nineteenth century, when its light grey effect was exaggerated by extreme leading (wide spacing between the lines). This delicate type enjoyed a success of novelty in the carefully produced *editions-de-luxe* of such printers as Bodoni, but it naturally could not stand careless printing on the cheap, coarse papers which were coming into use, and book production throughout the world became as bad as it is in Canada today. Unbalanced compromises and gro-

tesque types were produced wholesale for the disgruntled market, and printers and publishers, knowing as little about type forms as the founders, welcomed each new face only to throw it away in six months for a newer one, equally bad—very much like radios and automobiles today.

Through the gloom of the Victorian era several main tendencies can be traced developing towards the typographical excellences of the books of England, the Netherlands, and Germany today. The first of these was the then extraordinary move of reviving the 'old style' types of William Caslon, cut over a hundred years before. I say extraordinary then, because at that time book-makers were ignoring the benefits they might have gained from the experiences of the better printers of earlier times.

Yet, while some boggled at looking back a hundred years, others were seeking an escape from everyday drabness in the imagined splendours of the past. The leader of the discontents into the realm of books was William Morris, who carried the anachronistic mediaevalism of the Pre-Raphaelites into literature, furniture, interior decoration, and finally into printing. The importance of his efforts at the Kelmscott Press is not in the work itself, but in the demonstration which it gave of the beauties of old books and the consequent lesson that the experiences of the past cannot be neglected in successful book design. That is to say, for example, that Canadian books would be better if their designers looked beyond contemporary advertising display and English work of the mid-nineteenth century, not for purposes of blind copying, but for intelligent development of older and better principles.

The requirements of any type for a book must be primarily legibility, where possible beauty, and finally suitability.

The manner in which the type is set on the page has much to do with both its legibility and beauty. For example, the practice in this country of wide spacing between words makes for slow reading by checking the eye with white spaces and on the aesthetic side has been condemned by Sir Emery Walker, the inspirer and chief guide of the typographical revivals in England and Germany. The practice of using a small size of type and adding artificial bulk to the book by wide spacing between the lines does not detract from the legibility of the type if the lines are long enough, but definitely mars its beauty, which would be enhanced by the use of a larger size 'set solid.' Unfortunately the public, educated to pay for its books by size, balks at the artificial bulk produced by a large type, while failing to notice the greater superfluity given by spacing between words and lines.

As to the legibility of letters themselves: carefully controlled experiments show that the subject is far too difficult to permit of definite statement, but, roughly speaking, it may be said that the theoretically ideal type would be a well-rounded 'sans serif'—that is entirely without the short cross lines defined above—in which there was no contrast between the thick and thin strokes.

Unfortunately this is the most difficult kind of letter to design, as anyone can see by looking at the unpleasant emaciated mistakes which are coming to dominate the advertising columns of our newspapers. Also the novelty of this type makes for slow reading. 'Modern' looks as though it would be easy to read, but despite its commonness can only be read slightly faster than 'sans serif.' 'Old style' can be read most quickly and accurately, and further research suggests that it is its ordinariness which makes it best, a finding which warns us that whatever types we find most beautiful we cannot use them if they are at all out of the ordinary.

Beauty, of course, must be a matter of taste. The Gill Sans—one of the only two successful 'sans serif' types cut, the other being by a German follower of Gill's teachings—has a dignity of simplicity and beauty of function denied more ornate styles, and would suggest itself as the type of the future, if it was not for the fact that generous patronizing of bad copies will bring it into ill-repute. At the other extreme is the formal gothic black letter. (This must not be confused with 'old English' whose prototype was a gothic '*lettre batarde*' based on a cursive Flemish hand). William Morris championed formal gothic for its beauty, as he did everything associated with the late middle ages, but he was a dilettante whose enthusiasms are discounted by practical typographers. However, in Stanley Morison, ardent critic of Morris, we find a practical typographer with a secret yearning for gothic. Morison, who was typographical expert for the (English) Lanston Monotype Corporation, and is now advisor to the Cambridge University Press, says: 'I may believe, as I do, that black letter is in design more homogeneous, more picturesque, more dramatic and more lively a type than the grey round roman we use, but I do not expect people to read a book in it,' for, he points out, people are accustomed to roman type, and literate society is now too great in mass and correspondingly too slow in movement to accept any novelty. This brings us back to the necessity for ordinariness and the preference of many printers themselves who like Caslon because, they say, 'It is a good honest face.' What better reason could there be?

One last requirement of legibility and beauty: the ascenders (the parts of 'd's', 'b's', etc., above the line) must be reasonably high and the descenders (the parts of 'g's', 'p's', etc., below the line) must be fairly long, because it has been found that without adequate contrast, speed and accuracy in reading are decreased, while it is obvious that if one takes a beautiful type and compresses the ascenders and descenders the proportion will be changed. Yet in every Canadian book I have seen the ascenders are little higher than the 't's' and the descenders are compressed almost out of existence, despite the fact that the types go by the names of famous designers of the past who, by good luck or good sense, elongated the ascending and descending letters. It is as if a tall thin man named Baskerville went into a midway laughing gallery and saw himself in a curved mirror dis-



torted into a Humpty-Dumpty figure also called Baskerville. Of course he could laugh at the spectacle, knowing it was not real; but the spectacle of the distorted types in Canadian books is hardly funny.

Yet it is possible that our books are as bad as they are because the contents are no better. There is a book of modern Canadian poetry which is a very suitable piece of work, for the cover is a pretentious sham and the type is over-decorated with elongated serifs which, like some poets, are ostentatious but superfluous. There is a book by a humorist in which the designer's choice of initial letters is as funny as anything the author wrote. There are some reprints of early Canadiana which are fine examples of 'period' printing; they look as though they had been printed and cased in a backwoods shack some time before the war of 1812.



## THE NEW WRITERS

XXIV

ERIC LINKLATER

MR. LINKLATER'S schooldays in Scotland were curtailed by war and his soldierly ambitions. The latter were honourably fulfilled, and Mr. Linklater retired to the University of Aberdeen to dally for a year or two with medical text-books (which later he sensibly pawned). A grain of reflection caused him to exchange his medical prospects (bad) for an Honours M.A. in English; and thereafter he has entertained himself in successive years with journalism on the *Times of India*, university lecturing in Britain, and adventuring with a Commonwealth Fellowship in the universities of the United States, amusing experiences, but not to be confused with his real work. With his three novels in as many years, he is an example of a young man who has written his way to a decent income without committing himself to the habits or routine of a staid profession.

Today he is as famous as the sale in England of nearly fifty thousand copies of *Juan in America*, his third and latest novel, can make him; but he is a writer with his future voyaging uncharted: his first two novels differ widely from each other and from the third, and the success of the third—a satire on modern America—cannot be repeated in kind.

The curious thing about his two earlier books was that their subject-matter was less ambitious than their style warranted, as though Mr. Linklater had set himself to write good novels, but had had no thought of outstandingly good novels; as if his first idea had been to get something done and sold and published, as no doubt it was. But Mr. Linklater's pen was apt to sparkle into verbal brilliance even if he were only filling an empty

column of his university magazine; writing it would seem the first nonsense that came into his head, with an eye on the office clock and a cheerful oath for the weary compositor. From such moments came a grotesquerie of neat phrasing run mad, a parcel of clever irrationality at which Mr. Chesterton (who discovered in Nonsense the seeds of religion) would gladly have swept off his hat. When he broke into novel-writing with *Whitemaa's Saga*, his pen, already master of glib precision and of wit which pleased by its very rotundity, became more earnest in its general intention, but continued to waggle slickly and boisterously by turn. The material was already in him. The story is of the generation of Scots students returned from war to enliven a northern university with intermittent bouts of hard drinking and more or less brisk thinking. It is the sort of thing that makes the demagogue critic say: 'All this is largely autobiography. But it's as well that he has written it out of his system. We'll await his second with interest.' The virile note, however, was too rare in contemporary fiction to escape recognition. His hardy crowd of characters have no regrets. For Mr. Linklater, unlike the German novelists, enjoyed his war on the whole. His experiences confirmed and strengthened his romantic attitude, just as the same experiences would entitle another fellow to machine-gun the politicians of the next. There are patches of tough humour and bluntly insinuating wit, and sometimes the blah-blah of rococo sophistication, for the returned warriors are garrulous and eager to air their views so be it they are never profound nor offered seriously—and some surprisingly April love-making, with important excursions to Orkney, the hero's birthplace, and glimpses of poachers, farmers, and fairs.

*Whitemaa's Saga* was serious at bottom, for its hero was mildly concerned as to what he should do with his life, and it required a killing—a serious matter—to settle the answer. But *Poet's Pub* is pure thistledown. It is a novel of light comedy ingredients in which the real entertainment is the running embroidery of flippant intellectualism. One feels that the writer's material—an English inn, American visitors, stolen plans, and a cross-country pursuit—is definitely below his powers; that this material is chosen because it is popular, and is then intellectualized beyond popularity because that is Mr. Linklater's fun. The inn becomes an expensive concern with Elizabethan atmosphere but modern conveniences, both managed by a very minor poet for Lady Cotton, the beer-magnate. The poet and *The Pelican* 'were advertised together, tastefully, pleasantly, in social paragraphs and semi-literary journals.' The guests are the typical celebrities of our day sketched into existence for the sheer joy of them, and the butler, the inventor of blue cocktails, is the owner of an encyclopaedic knowledge derived from cigarette cards. The crook of detective fiction has become Mr. Aesop Wesson, a gentle grafter, whose lectures in the person of Mr. George Moore on the 'intimacies of marital and extra-marital adjustment' are still remembered in



the smaller towns of the Middle West, and whose greatest *faux pas* delivering a paper in South Dakota by the 'Seer of Wessex, England,' after the radio announcement of Mr. Hardy's death. Such literary kickshaws as Elizabethan menus and minor epics in the making are scattered plentifully, and after-dinner conversation is remarkable for its ease and scope. A guest is asked for a sample of real unquestionable poetry:—

'This:

A white crane  
Flying  
Flew across a black cloud.

There is a poem perfect and complete.'

'Did you say a crane, Mr. Telfer?' asked Lady Porlett.

'I did.'

'Would a stork do as well or would that spoil the poem?'

Which is less a criticism of modern poetry than the utilization of it for higher ends.

There is no shutting one's eyes to the fact that Mr. Linklater has some very good things to say about getting drunk. His enthusiasms for beer, bastards, and a Viking ancestry have outlived his adolescence and will outlast the critic's sniff of immaturity. Here is something youthful in other men but singularly permanent in Mr. Linklater. And this has not proved the worse for him, for *Juan in America* has justified his Elizabethan-Rabelaisian-Byronic enthusiasms. Ancient gusto is renewed in modern terms.

With *Juan in America* Mr. Linklater's matter really equals his manner. The Commonwealth Fellowship gave him a whole continent to play with, and that it seems was just what he wanted. The Byron enthusiasm gives us a descendant of Don Juan for hero—an observant young man with abundant curiosity and a touch of English reticence when sober. Juan is the reader's mechanical eyes through which we stare at the changing American scene. With him we meet collegian, professor, ball-gamster, and gangster; policeman and bootlegger; lodger and landlady; Negro and film star; musician and politician; Virginian and Jew; German and Russian; acrobat, mortician, airman, and millionaire. It is picaresque adventure described with the salt of realism and conditioned from start to finish by humour. The successful combination of these qualities gives the book an intense individuality and importance. Grinning, like a new Gulliver, he crosses the States, stepping carefully, and pocketing people here and there for better acquaintance. But it is the extraordinary variety and persistency of the humour as expressed impartially in characterization, situation, and dialogue, and the extraordinary vitality—the galumphing zest of the writer—his joy in his own acrobatics, that make the book a blast of originality.

He has been dubbed a Scots Aldous Huxley, which is absurd, for Huxley is so thoughtful that he believes only in the inadequacy of thought, while Linklater is unthinking enough to be content with wit and with the adequacy of life for its provision. Huxley toys with eroticism even when

it is described for the purpose of ridicule. Linklater is so free from it that he can make similes to the music of the bed-springs when Juan's temporary heroine yawns. His sex-humour never hides round corners, but prances robust and blatant like a Cupid at play; even the innuendo arrives with a shock of mirth.

Says the gangster's lovely but over-educated daughter to her angry and horrified father:—

'... Conduct is moral as it makes the individual more integrated. My life wasn't complete till Juan came, and now it is. I've been integrated if you know what that is.'

'Yes,' shouted Red-eye. 'You've been integrated and now you will have a baby, eh? Well, that young man will never integrate anybody else!'

Or hear the pair of them on religion:—

'Religion is only a social anaesthetic,' Lalage declared.

'D'you mean it's a bum show? Say, I've just given a thousand bucks to the church of St. Mark in Chicago, and d'you think I'd pay a hundred grand for protection if it wasn't worth it? Not on your life. If you had the responsibilities I have you wouldn't sneer at religion in that ignorant way.'

On the wit of the unsaid:—

'... The Jew's eyes had been blurred with tears. . . . You ever been married? Well, you don't know nothing yet. I've been married six months. She looks like a million dollars, but she only knows a hundred-and-twenty words and she's only got two ideas in her head. The other one's hats. And I got to go home. I got to go right home.'

Mr. Linklater does not laugh at Americans. He accepts them in the Chaucerian fashion as fellow-beings on whom one is not called to pass judgment—but he surreptitiously jots down their talk. It is satire in the most un-Swiftian sense, satire void of dislike. The humour is ferocious, the wit barks with glee, the fancy is unleashed and leaping high into the air, but the feelings of the writer are of the kindest. He would no more reform the States than he would reform the goose that laid the golden egg. To him Menckens and Lewises are nothing short of dangerous men. . . . America is the last stronghold of romance and Mr. Linklater would have it so: a land still untamed by socialism, uplifted but unbowed by the moralist, a land of the richest private enterprises and possibilities. Mr. Linklater's response to the States is the response of romantic conservatism to anarchy.

ERIC DUTHIE



## WATTMAN

By EDWARD ARTHUR BEDER

I REMEMBER how I first met Wattman. I had gone in to a place to ask for a job and he was waiting around in the office. The boss came out and questioned me—where had I been working, what class of work could I do, what did I expect to get—and finally he seemed satisfied and it was fixed up that I was to start in the next day.

Wattman came out with me. 'That's a good firm to work for,' he volunteered, 'you'll be well satisfied there. They do nice work.'

'That so?' I answered. 'I'll soon find out anyway.'

'Yes, that's right too,' he conceded, 'you'll soon find out.'

We walked on a little way in silence. 'I heard you tell him you were a stranger here,' he continued, 'have you got a room yet?'

'No,' I replied, 'I only got in this morning from Buffalo and I started out to find a job first thing. I can always get a room.'

'Listen,' he said, 'I've got a room you could have. A dandy room, big and lofty, a front room, you ought to see it. It's my own house so I'm careful who comes in. It's easily big enough for a young couple but I'd sooner rent it to a young feller like you—you can understand. Come home with me now and take a look at it. And say—he looked straight at me—'I can wait till you get a payday.'

That was how I came to room at Wattman's house. The room was all he claimed for it. A big front one with a very high ceiling and two big windows that looked out on a pair of white-washed cottages across the street. There were no pictures or decorations of any sort on the walls, they were stained a pale green, and no covering on the painted floorboards, but I liked it that way. When you get rooming in different places over a number of years you get tired of the stuffy little holes and the junk that fills them in the regular rooming houses, you get to feeling a dislike of sitting in them, they smother you, you stay out as long as you can to avoid the queer smell that's in them.

Wattman's room took my eye the moment I stepped into it. The big windows were open, the sun poured in in long strong rays that seemed like welcoming arms to me. Its wide emptiness set my nostrils sniffing as though I was out in a park, I could breathe in it, I liked it. For furniture there was a white enamel bed in one corner, an old leather couch facing it across the room, a small table set by the window nearest the couch and a couple of brown kitchen chairs.

Wattman interested me. He was a big man with good shoulders that gave him a fine erect bearing and in his walk—for that matter any time you looked at him—there was a blend of gracefulness and strength that was pleasing to that sense in us that likes to see a man full-sized and active. His face wasn't quite as satisfactory as his frame. The skin was tanned and full of

colour, but his nose curved at the end and gave him a rather crafty touch. He never bothered very much about the arrangement of his hair, it usually came straight over and reached with a final sweep toward his eyes, which perhaps might account for the impression I had that his forehead was low. His eyes were small; in conversation his features would crease up readily and then his eyes would dance brightly, they would shine with a merry light in them.

The thing that interested me so much about Wattman was the crafty tip to his nose. It didn't seem to belong. His manner wasn't crafty at all. It was hale and hearty and open. Not too hearty, he wasn't in the least boisterous, rather he was full of fine—picturesque wouldn't be too strong a word—courtesy.

When I got home of an evening, after giving me a little time to rest up and read the paper, Wattman would usually come up to my room. 'How's the boy?' he would greet in his firm, good-humoured voice, with a little toss upward of his chin and smile at me. Then he would sit down on the couch, back erect and head in the air and roll himself a cigarette. He would finish with a quick lick and the cigarette would always flare up a little because of the end not having any tobacco in it. After he took a few puffs he would go on in soft tones that conveyed a feeling of warm, friendly interest, 'How did it go today—lots of work—are you feeling tired?'

He would nod in a dignified way as I answered and now and then, as I went into details of some difficult job, he would say sympathetically, 'I understand—I understand.'

When his third or fourth cigarette would go out on him and remain stuck to one of his lips, like as not he would say, 'Will you have a glass of beer? I've got a barrel of good beer, nice and cold, come on, have a glass of beer!'

Then with a quick motion that emphasized his graceful bulk he would jump up and stride to the head of the stairs. He would call down to his wife in a firm pleasant voice. 'Hannah, my dear, bring a pitcher of beer. Mr. Nemo is going to drink with me.' And right away his wife would hurry down to the cellar and draw off a pitcher of beer. She would bring it up all foaming and aswirl from her trip up the stairs and she would put the tray down on the table and set out the glasses in her quick nervous way. Her husband would pat her on the back and I could see she glowed at his touch. 'Thank you, my dear, thank you. You're a good girl, Hannah.'

It was a treat to listen to the way Wattman spoke to his wife and children. That's why I say he was so courteous. In his own house a man sometimes drops the politeness that he shows to outsiders. Not so with Wattman. He was at his best in his own home. There was a charm in the way he treated his wife, he had a way of saying, 'Hannah, my dear,' that captivated me sitting in



## HEADLANDS

WOOD ENGRAVING, BY C. S. SCHAEFER



my room upstairs. His voice was so finely modulated, it shaded off into such a sympathetic tone that was so completely charming, that I can picture how pleased his wife must have felt at his tenderness.

It was all the more extraordinary when you looked at Mrs. Wattman. To be frank about it I had a shock the first time I saw her. A small thin woman with a bloodless face and the bones standing out gauntly on her cheeks, her perpetual expression of sheepish obedience was weirdly challenged by a mocking squint in one of her eyes. I never found out which eye it was that rebelled so against the permanent set of her features, I simply couldn't look on that unlovely face long enough.

They had seven children. They came about every fifteen months. It was hard luck on Wattman, they were all girls and the reason he had seven children was that he was trying for a boy. He wanted a son very badly, he had a sort of hunger for a lad of his own. But that didn't make him touchy with the girls. He treated them just as affectionately as he did his wife. He fondled them, he gave them money for ice cream and candies and they worshipped him. At the same time you had to admire the way he ruled them. When one of the children was naughty to such an extent that Mrs. Wattman felt obliged to tell on her, Wattman never got angry. He would call out her name in that firm, understanding voice of his and the little girl would come to him, her face white but all steeled to go through with it and Wattman, in his dignified way, would put her over his knee, spank her, and the little girl would run out somewhere in the back to cry.

It was early summer when I took that room at Wattman's. The days were long and bright with a hot sun during the middle part of them, but toward evening it cooled off. The smell of the earth rose up clean and sweet from the watered lawns and there was a fragrance from the growing things that was good to sniff at.

When I got back from work Wattman would usually be sitting on the steps leading to his front door, that was the nearest thing to a porch he could claim, a cigarette between his lips, a hose in his hand, watering the small green space that was spread out before him. He liked doing that, he liked holding the thin rubber tube and playing the quick stream up and down, covering the sidewalk and squirting the water up the side of the house and sometimes flicking a little of it at any of his children who were playing around. They would scream merrily and feel a little proud, too, before the other children, proud that their father played with them so right on the street.

Occasionally I would go and join Wattman on the steps. He would gladly make room for me alongside with a quick inviting shift. Sitting in our shirt sleeves we would smoke and talk; the grass would stand out green and drenched before us and gradually the street would grow darker and quieter. Some of the children would go to bed, others would tire and rest up on their steps or sit patiently on the curb telling stories and

speaking softly together, their arms all linked up and their ribboned heads bent low.

There was a magic about this hour of twilight, even the noisiest child felt it and grew quiet in a sort of embarrassed way. At the end of the street the sky would change to purple and plum and blue, the sun would dissolve itself and the heavens would glow with spilt gold. Blue shapes edged with gilt would rise up in all sorts of queer patterns, take on deeper colourings and refashion themselves. Then a blue blackness would spread itself like a cloak and the gold would sink right out of the sky.

Wattman did very little. He explained his method of making a living to me in these conversations we had sitting on his steps. He loafed all summer, he did nothing. Around early September he opened a small fur store in a certain part of the city and took in repair work. He always opened up in the same neighbourhood, trying to get as near as possible to the store he had the previous year. He had built up some sort of connection in this way and he could depend upon getting in a certain amount of work. By the time February came around he usually had about eight or nine hundred dollars saved up, or rather Mrs. Wattman did, he turned all the money over to her, he told me. They lived on this money during the summer; Mrs. Wattman was very economical, she made the payments on the house and doled him out so much a week for himself. That was the way he preferred it. Generally when the fall came around enough remained to open up the store again. If there had been a lean season or some special expense had cropped up, like sickness or his wife's confinement and he was short in money, why, then he borrowed from his brother-in-law. He only needed a month's rent and a few dollars for small expenses, handbills and things like that. He kept all the fixtures that he needed in the attic of his house.

'I work right in the store,' he said, 'I set up a table on a trestle and work right there. I don't need any fancy fixtures. A lady who wants fancy fixtures doesn't come to me, she goes down town. When a woman come into my place she likes it all the better to see me in my coat and working. She has an idea that my price must be lower—she feels that she is saving money.'

When I asked him why he didn't do something all summer and keep his money instead of eating it up, he shook his head. 'My dear friend,' he said softly, 'what can I do? I don't know any other business—it's hard to go into something you don't understand. How do I know? I might lose all my money in a month. I would have to starve all summer. No, no, this way I know what I have to do. Besides it gets so awful hot in summer, how can you work at anything! It's better as I am.' Then he would go on to speak of some of the things that had happened to him during the years he had kept the store, some of the jobs he had taken in and made money on, and how once in a while a cranky customer made trouble for him.

Wattman took a pride in his back garden. He spent a good deal of time there taking care of it,

weeding it out, watering it, sometimes just staring at the plants for long periods and smoking cigarettes. His chief delight was his Indian corn. A pleased look came over his face as he showed the sturdy plants to me. He glowed as the warm sun fell upon them and upon him, his tanned skin glinting ruddily. 'Do you know why I grow corn?' he asked in a proud way. I shook my head. 'When they're ripe it's time for me to open my store!'

He meant it. When the corn stood ripening in his back yard, the waxen heads yellowing in the sun, he opened his store.

I knew about it because one evening when I returned from work the front steps were empty. The small lawn looked parched in the heat and there seemed a silence about Wattman's house. Sitting in my room before an open window I wondered at it. And then there was a knock at my door and Mrs. Wattman entered in her hesitating, timid way.

'If you please, Mr. Nemo,' she said in a low voice, 'Mr. Wattman's taken a store.'

'That's good,' I said.

'If you please, Mr. Nemo,' she said nervously, 'he sent an express man to get the couch.'

'The couch,' I said wonderingly.

She indicated it. 'Yes,' she said, 'Mr. Wattman always takes the couch with him. Since he's had a store he always take the couch with him.'

'All right,' I said. 'I'll take those things off and then you can have it.'

'Thank you,' she answered gratefully, 'I'll tell the express man to come up for it.'

I cleared off the books and papers that were on it and gave the express man a hand with it down the stairs. It was an old couch and shabby with long use. The springs were half broken and made themselves felt uncomfortably through the misplaced stuffing, and the centre of it sagged badly.

From the attic the express man took down trestles and boards, a couple of figures, a machine and a quantity of iron piping. With the Wattman children standing around and looking very important he got the things on his waggon and drove off with his unwieldy load.

About ten o'clock that night Wattman came into my room. He was in good spirits. His face was red and flushed and smiling, and he called to his wife to bring up some beer. 'Have some beer,' he said heartily, 'have some beer. I took a store today, have some beer.'

We sat and talked and drank the beer. He told me what rent he was paying and how he had arranged with a man to look after the furnace when it should be needed. He was pleased about this as he had a dread of doing this kind of work. He told me of an old customer who had passed by and seeing him had entered the store. She had promised to bring in her coat and also to tell her sister-in-law about him.

He was full of good spirits in his hearty way. His voice retained that courteous tone of his, never reaching a loud note for all his evident exhilaration. His hair fell straight down toward his eyes,

his face was flushed, his eyes sparkled. It was hard to reconcile his full soft voice with his rather dishevelled appearance.

'Say,' I said, 'your wife asked me to give that couch that was in here to the express man. What do you need a couch down at the store for?'

He looked at me and smiled. His voice was full of a gracious courtesy. It was quite extraordinary the fine feeling he put into it.

'My dear friend,' he said, 'I like to have it with me. I need it. In the season I'm at the store all the time. Many nights it's eleven and sometimes twelve o'clock before I leave the place. It's hard work. So now and then I like to take a little nap. When I feel like it, after lunch sometimes, I like to take a little nap.'

'Right in the store?'

'What's the matter with you?' he said good-naturedly. 'I get a carpenter to partition me off a little office in the back of the store. Just a little office. I keep the phone there and my bills and I put the couch there too. And when I feel like it I lock the door and take a little nap.'

'Suppose a customer wants to come in?' I asked.

'Hah, a customer! There's no customers going around right after lunch. In the evenings I see a few customers. But during the day hardly anyone comes in. Sometimes I don't see a soul, nobody puts their head in the door. Come over when you get a chance. I keep some beer at the store and you'll be company for me. We'll have a talk. Don't forget, now, any time you feel like it, come over.'

I did. I went over to see him one afternoon when I didn't happen to be working. I passed the store on the street car and made my way back to it. It was a poor neighbourhood made up of small stores carrying cheap stocks set out in a drab, ineffective way.

Just before I reached Wattman's place a woman went in. I didn't want to bother him whilst he had a customer so I waited around outside until the woman should come out. It was a fall day with a high blustering wind that swooped savagely down the street, tossing papers and light garbage violently in the air and cutting right through me. After standing about for ten minutes or so the cold affected me. I decided to enter Wattman's store. There was no particular harm in going in even if he was occupied.

The door was locked. I tried a number of times, I rattled the handle and pushed heavily against it but there was no doubt about it, the door was locked. I peered through the glass. I saw a table made up of a board set on trestles, a machine alongside it and several pieces of fur scattered around. At the back of the store a wooden partition rose up. The unpainted boards looked crude and cheap and seemed to accentuate the emptiness of the place.

'Well, that's damn funny,' I muttered to myself. 'I could have sworn I saw a woman go in there.'

I walked away a few yards and thought about it. I crossed the street and took shelter in the



lobby of a small picture show. The girl in the ticket booth eyed me suspiciously, but I paid no attention to her.

I thought of Wattman, his fine big figure and the perfect courtesy of his manner. I thought of his wife and her intolerable squint and how she had said simply, 'he always takes the couch with him.' I decided to wait.

At the end of about half an hour the door of Wattman's store opened and the woman came out. Wattman accompanied her to the door. He stood there for a minute, big, suave and attentive. I saw him bow his head with that fine deference that was so much a part of him. The woman smiled and went away.

I smiled too. I identified that courteous trick of his. I couldn't hear what he said, of course, but I knew that motion of his. He always made use of it when he addressed his wife in those perfect tones that had so impressed me. Standing in that small lobby behind the shelter of the gaudy billboards I seemed to hear clearly, 'Thank you, Hannah, my dear—you're a good girl, Hannah, my dear. . . .' I laughed.

### COMMENT ON ART

**A** GAIN and again the critic of Canadian art, if he is to speak his mind, finds that he is in constant contradiction with his own statements, depending on whether he is placing his premise on a Canadian or on a world's ground; also that he antagonizes both artists and public, everytime he takes one point of view or the other. The answer to this is too complex to be analyzed briefly.

Let us bring these views to actual facts. There was, last month, an exhibition of small pictures by the members of the Ontario Society of Artists at the Toronto Art Gallery. Together with this collection there were shown a group of portraits of artists by the artists themselves, and a good number of American water-colours. The Canadian pictures were extremely fine little paintings. They were intimate and restful. They were, in the great majority, very well done indeed, and they were extremely serious things, however small in size, and you felt that you needed to stand erect and commune with their singing 'God Save the King.' There was not a single discordance. Even the pictures by Charles Comfort, the only prodigal son of this esteemed family, were of the type which you would enjoy on your walls; but their bright colours would have to find one of these suitable 'modern' homes that are delivered ready-made by the decorator.

Surely at this point someone is going to ask me: 'But what was wrong with these small pictures,' and I shall have to regretfully state: 'Absolutely nothing wrong whatsoever; on the contrary, a very perfect and genteel lot.' There were the admirable little cows, by Mr. Palmer, and I say admirable without irony for they were quite well observed and well painted; there were exquisite ducks feeding on the mirror-like surface of a lake, by Mary Wrinch; there were charming little card-

board houses, by A. J. Casson; there were—and these were not quite as happy in their mood, and not very much in step with the rest of the show—pictures by Yvonne McKague of the sad sky of Cobalt with a note of distress in the design of the heavy drape of black smoke hanging above the houses of this mining town. Fall foliage, oak trees, soft melting snow, smiling backyards, it was local introspection everywhere, and local satisfaction.

In the two rooms adjoining there were the strange faces of strange-looking men and women; thick lines, colours crushed on the canvas with the thumb or the spatula, broad brimmed hats, bohemian style, and sailors' caps. The painted lips of Helen Stein looked like a red poppy aggressively offered as a symbol or as a confession. Then there were the water-colours by the Americans; jazz houses holding by some magic above the ground, trees that were hardly more than a faint shadow, turnips and washer-women; the strange design of chimney roofs and cows à la Jan Matulka, all of it a kaleidoscope of our modern chaos, not a confession of inertia, blessed candour, inept happiness.

Now, of course, if you are to see these little Canadian pictures, only in the light of what they are, and if you see them by themselves, completely oblivious of the fact that south of us, east and west, and even north, there are lives lived, life in a stir, life alive, manifold, multiplied and divided, then you will feel as I would, quite satisfied with them. But, Oh! what a provincial, inconsequential little lot they are if you throw them into the wide world, with all kinds of pictures by all kinds of artists who are artists of capital importance even though they may not spell their names with capital letters.

JEHANNE BIETRY SALINGER

### THE VANCOUVER SCHOOL OF DECORATIVE AND APPLIED ART

**I**T is little more than a decade since the first stirrings of a desire for an art school animated the minds of Vancouver art lovers to a sufficient extent to incite anyone to take action. The B.C. Art League was then a new and enthusiastic society with two principal objectives, an art school and a gallery. Both these objectives have now been reached.

Mr. Bernard McEvoy, the veteran literary and art critic of the *Vancouver Daily Province*; Mr. Charles H. Scott, and Mr. James Leyland addressed various meetings, urging the necessity for a school of art, while Mr. Leyland and Mr. John Radford wrote persuasive letters to every society in the province, asking for cooperation and support.

Six years ago, as a result of continued effort during a period of nearly five years, the Vancouver Art School came into existence. It now bears the distinctive if cumbersome name, Vancouver School of Decorative and Applied Arts.

The school is most ably staffed—if such a thing be possible, too ably. There is an air of almost



crushing efficiency, of cast-iron opinions, about the full-time instructors that is undoubtedly conducive to excellence of technique, but in my considered opinion is subversive to the development of originality in the students. That is, perhaps the weak point of every school of art. Each bears its own unmistakable stamp. These four, who are artists of recognized ability, are the Director, Mr. Charles H. Scott, dip. G.S.A.; Mr. F. Horsman Varley, A.R.C.A.; Mr. J. W. G. Macdonald, D.A. (Edin.), and Miss Grace Melvin, D.A. (Glas.). They are assisted by nine part-time instructors.

The student personnel is of an equally high order. Young people for the most part, keen as mustard and brimming with talent. Including the evening and Saturday morning classes there are between three and four hundred of these eager young things, turning out effective, clean-cut work. The strongly modernistic trend of the design may not appeal to all critics, but no one can fail to admire the thoroughness of the craftsmanship. The sloven and the dilettante have no place *en cette galère*.

It is a matter for deep regret that the people of Vancouver have not yet risen to the heights of housing their art school in decent quarters. They are at present occupying rooms in an old school and in the School Board building, which are wholly inadequate in every way. I partly blame the staff of the school for this state of affairs. In every exhibition of students' work that has been shown in the city, for the purpose of interesting citizens, a choice has been made of work so modern as to be repellent to the average person. It is, of course, natural that the instructors should regard as most worthy the work that most truly reflects their own artistic beliefs, but the unfortunate fact remains that the citizen looks at these exhibitions and says, 'If this is the sort of stuff they teach I for one will not vote for a new art school by-law.'

During the first and second years the basic subjects are taught with satisfying thoroughness, all the more commendable when one considers the wearying handicaps of the inconvenient classrooms. These subjects are drawing, composition, design, commercial art, and modelling, to which in the second year is added architecture. Students may then specialize in the third and fourth years. The drawing and painting course leads on to a finale of mural decoration, and includes illustration and commercial art. So far this course is chiefly occupied with work from life. It is hoped when possible to have summer classes in landscape. The design and decorative art course includes crafts.

The third choice is a course in modelling and sculpture, under the guidance of Mr. Charles Marega. The work of the students under this able sculptor is distinguished by harmony, rhythm, and a feeling of motion. Here the modernistic touch is restfully absent, yet there is nothing of the posed, frozen effect that so often mars sculpture.

The crafts are fascinating, especially the ceramics. An interesting point about this craft is

that the clay is dug a short distance from Vancouver, at Haney and Pitt Meadows. The needle work and illumination are exquisite. Indian legends and legendary figures are often developed in design for stitchery.

The students publish an Annual, the *Paint Box*, which is a book of seventy-five pages, printed on excellent paper, with numerous illustrations. They also produce a Christmas play; last year it was a miracle play, *The Star*, with remarkably beautiful artistic and scenic effects. Every year, too, they give a costume ball. There are other pleasant little social activities. The students have even their own language—it may be in honour of the towns that gave them more than one of their revered masters—it is broad Scotch. It is a little startling to the new student to be told that Maister-r Scott is awa' the noo, or that he is ablow in the office.

Now that Vancouver has an Art Gallery there will be more help and encouragement for these young artists, and it is probable that the citizens will turn their attention to the fine work that is being accomplished and reward the workers, both staff and students, by building the desperately-needed art school.

HELEN DICKSON

### 'NO KISS'

No kiss will burn  
That touches stone.

My lips were carved  
By other hands  
Into a coldness  
Never known,  
Into a rigid  
Voiceless moan.

Your mouth on mine  
Is fire on stone.

DOROTHY LIVESAY

### CONTRIBUTORS

E. A. BEDER made his first bow to the readers of THE CANADIAN FORUM with an incisive article on the Toronto Press which appeared in the October number.

RAYMOND I. DIAMOND is a young Rochester poet.

ERIC DUTHIE after graduating from the University of Aberdeen was connected for some time with the publishing house of Jonathan Cape. For the past two years he has been on the staff of the Department of English at Queen's University.

MARJORIE MCKENZIE, a graduate of Queen's, at present resides in Ottawa.

UPTON SINCLAIR, author of *The Jungle*, *The Brass Check*, *Oil* and a dozen other works of courage, needs no introduction.



## FARMING A CONTINENT

THE SOVIETS CONQUER WHEAT, by Anna Louise Strong (McClelland & Stewart; pp. 288; \$2.75).

THE SOVIET PLANNED ECONOMIC ORDER, by William Henry Chamberlin (World Peace Foundation; pp. 258; \$2.50).

THE mystification which exists in the outside world regarding conditions in the Soviet Union is due to a variety of causes. Most important of these is the effort of the convinced individualist—who is usually a beneficiary of the competitive system—to discredit any social development which threatens to undermine his favoured position. This 'capitalist propaganda' ranges all the way from the 'honest' and 'objective' criticism of socialist theory and practice by liberal professors, to the conscious distortions and fabrications of unprincipled publicists who are prepared to use any weapon to destroy a system which they hate and fear.

Another cause of misunderstanding is the inability of many people to grasp the necessary distinction between political and social revolution. Realizing that the Russian revolution was social as well as political, they hastily assumed that social reconstruction could be of the same cataclysmic and apocalyptic nature as the political seizure of power. For more than a decade, while the Communists were busily engaged in forging the necessary tools for the creation of a new order, external criticism consisted largely of variations on this theme—'Russia has gone Socialist—and see what has happened to Russia!' As a matter of fact in a large field of productive relationships Russia had not 'gone Socialist,' she was only preparing to go Socialist. Until the introduction of the Five-Year Plan the great mass of the people in the Soviet Union were still working on an individualistic basis, and it was not until the beginning of the present year that a majority was drawn into the socialist sector. In 1917 more than four-fifths of the population of the U.S.S.R. consisted of peasant farmers of a very backward type; illiterate and superstitious, they cultivated small plots or strips of land mainly by hand labour, aided by primitive implements. To socialize such a community, overnight, by proclamation or governmental decree was obviously impossible. The material means to make such an order effective were entirely lacking. Large-scale mechanical farming was the only possible solution, and before this could be attempted it was necessary to build up the transportation system, greatly increase the supply of coal and metals, and to construct factories for the production of tractors, combines, and other modern farm implements. The Five-Year Plan was very largely an undertaking to

provide a physical basis for the socialization of the Russian peasant. A beginning had already been made. A number of large state farms had been created, and scattered over the Union were a series of small collective farms which had been started by groups of social-minded peasants. In 1929-30, the second year of the Plan, it was considered that sufficient advance had been made in the industrial field to warrant the creation of 'collectives' on a large scale.

In *The Soviets Conquer Wheat*, Anna Louise Strong has written a stirring account of 'The war for Soviet wheat.' It was real war, with casualties on both sides, and the method was that of the class struggle. On the one side were the kulaks—the rich peasants—who were determined individualists; on the other, the poor peasants, backed by the whole force of the Communist Party; and in between the 'middle' peasants, puzzled and worried, swung first to one side and then to the other. By the spring of 1930 half of the peasants were enrolled in collectives and the first great socialist sowing began. Brigades of 'shock troops' from the town were rushed to the assistance of the collectives, old landmarks were eliminated and the boundaries between the narrow fields passed out of existence. The tractor stations sent their fleets of machines—manned by mechanics—to the southern regions, and, as spring opened up, they worked their way northward across a continent. Mrs. Strong says: 'The harvest that year was the most important harvest that has ever occurred since prehistoric man first learned to cast grain on the soil for food. It marks a new epoch for human farming.' It is admitted that in organizing the collectives extreme methods were used in many instances. In some cases large groups of peasants were herded into place by threats, and later on a number of those who were responsible for this terrorism were punished for their excessive zeal. After the crop was sown Stalin issued a statement in which he rebuked those members of the party who had become 'dizzy from success', and announced that no peasant should be taken into a collective except on a purely voluntary basis. Following this pronouncement millions of farmers left the socialized farms and the numbers enrolled dropped in a few months from 50 to about 25 per cent. of the entire peasant population. But the great crop was sown! And when harvest time arrived and the Kolhoz, by deep ploughing and through the use of selected seed, obtained a harvest of 16 bushels of wheat to the acre, while individuals averaged 9 to 12, the peasants promptly flocked back to the collectives—without any compulsion—until in the spring of 1931 more than 50 per cent. were once more within the socialized sector.

Admitted that serious mistakes have been made, that there has been compulsion, suffering, and terror; the justification for all this may be found not only in the immediate improvement in the life of the peasant on the collective farm, but in the projects for the socialist farm-cities of the near future:—

According to plan, Filonova, today a township centre buried in spring mud, is to become at the end of five years the residence of the 60,000 peasants now scattered in 127 straggling hamlets. They will all move to town, create for themselves the cultural benefits of city life—day nurseries, kindergartens, good schools, clubs, theatres. They will organize the present township as a single farm, to which they will all go out by auto over good roads to the field encampments for the sowing and harvest. The economic basis of their life will be grain-raising, supplemented by hogs for a bacon factory, dairying for a big modern creamery, vegetable raising for canning and sunflowers for oil. They will enjoy the healthful labour of farm-life in spring and summer, but not suffer its dreary winter isolation. In winter they work in the industrial establishment of their 'Socialist Farm-City.'

In this way the Soviet Union intends to resolve the ancient conflict between town and country—by doing away with the peasant. The town worker and the country worker will merge and become indistinguishable.

This is a book that may be recommended to all those who are interested in the progress of socialism in the Soviet Union. The author knows her background thoroughly, and the material is not as heavy as this review would make it appear. Mrs. Strong is an accomplished journalist and although she provides all the necessary facts she also introduces enough 'human interest' to keep the lay reader alert and interested from start to finish. It is also a book for those who are anxious about the future of Canadian agriculture, for no country that is vitally concerned in farming can afford to neglect or underestimate these developments in the Soviet Union. Kalenin, in addressing the Sixth Congress of Soviets, in March, 1931, said: 'In industry . . . we are still only striving to overtake the technical development of more advanced lands. But in farming—we are leaders on a new road. Here we go before all nations!'

A very fair 'objective' account of the genesis and progress of the Five-Year Plan, with special attention to the agricultural problem, is *The Soviet Planned Economic Order*, by William Henry Chamberlin. Unfortunately conditions change so rapidly under the Plan that before a book can be written and published half the statistical information is out of date. For instance in December 1930 when this book was written there was an acute shortage of food in the cities, but six months later queues were rarely seen and all the staple foods were readily obtainable. Mr. Chamberlin's summary of the origin and backgrounds of the Plan will be useful to anyone who wishes to obtain, in a condensed form, a general knowledge of the subject. The appendices, which make up two-fifths of the volume are very informative. It is enlightening to read the following Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, published in March, 1930, at a time when the Communists were being accused, throughout the world, of increased persecution of religious bodies. 'Decisively to stop the practice of closing churches administratively, with a fictitious justification of a voluntary desire on the part of the population . . . To hold guilty

persons to strictest responsibility for mocking the religious feelings of peasant men and women.'

J. F. WHITE

### A CAREFULLY PREPARED BANQUET

THE STORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE, by Edmund Kemper Broadus (Macmillans in Canada; pp. x, 624; \$6.00).

THIS is an admirable piece of bookmaking, and both the author and the publisher are to be congratulated on their success in providing exactly what is set forth in the title. For this is a really good story-book, well printed and beautifully illustrated. It does not profess to be another of those already too numerous text-books of the history of English literature. It does not give unnecessary dates and facts, biographical and bibliographical, which can easily be obtained from encyclopaedias and dictionaries; it does not profess to be all-inclusive, it is a pleasantly written tale about English books and the men and women who wrote them. Naturally enough we are given only a glimpse here and there, for the whole story of more than half a dozen centuries is brought within the limits of fourteen chapters. And Professor Broadus has rightly chosen a leisurely pace, and allowed himself plenty of room for illustration and a fuller treatment of the subjects he finds more interesting, or considers most entertaining and enlightening for his readers.

Thus perhaps the best chapter in the book is an admirable essay on 'John Bunyan's World—and John Dryden's,' a juxtaposition which enables him to avoid the one-sided view so often given of life in England after the Restoration. His point of view is justified and further accentuated by an illustration, reproduced from an early edition of *Pilgrim's Progress*, representing Christian and Faithful imprisoned in a cage and surrounded by the mob in Vanity Fair opposite the doors of a theatre, where Dryden's greatest success is announced as *All for Love, or the World Well Lost* by Beelzebub.

The method of this chapter is so good that we are disappointed not to see it employed again, but it is of course clear that the difficulties of the task increase enormously after we come to the beginning of the eighteenth century. Professor Broadus might well have borrowed Dryden's words (which he quotes) for a prefatory explanation: 'there is such variety of game springing up before me, that I am distracted in my choice, and know not which to follow. 'Tis sufficient to say, according to the proverb, that *here is God's plenty*.'

But Professor Broadus does not seem to be unduly distracted and God's plenty is turned into a very carefully prepared banquet, where the courses are suitably chosen for the tastes and palates of his young guests. He is saved from distraction by his paedagogical experience which has taught him what is good for the young student, and what is likely to arouse his curiosity and stimulate him to an independent voyage of



discovery. Can it be this which produces such a queer effect, when we look back over the story as a whole, and become aware of a growing disappointment as it proceeds from Chaucer's day to Masfield's as though both life and literature were losing vigour and vitality, as though the blood was running thinner and the limbs less powerful? Dryden did not feel it, writing three centuries after Chaucer's death: 'We have our forefathers and great-grandames before us, as they were in Chaucer's days; their general characters are still remaining in mankind, and even in England, though they are called by other names than those of monks and friars, and canons and lady abbesses, and nuns; for mankind is ever the same, and nothing lost out of Nature, though everything is altered.' And it may well be that a critic today, writing more than two centuries after Dryden, could still feel that mankind is ever the same, though everything is altered; but nevertheless we feel in Professor Broadus' story that something is lost out of Nature, and that something is lacking in reality or at least in completeness. This is perhaps due to the method of selection followed in the latter part of the story, where so much was necessarily excluded,—a paedagogic method rather than an artistic method, which eliminates not what is of less value or significance, but what is felt to be difficult or unsuitable for the young.

Evidently for the first reason Professor Broadus omitted such important figures in the field of English prose as Robert Burton and Jeremy Taylor and Sir Thomas Browne, or Hobbes and Locke, Burke and Gibbon, a piece of stern self-denial as his own book on Fuller would indicate. And perhaps it was for the second reason that we find no mention at all of the Pre-Raphaelites, of Swinburne and Pater, or of such nineteenth-century rebels as William Morris, Samuel Butler, and Bernard Shaw. The English theatre too is entirely ignored after 1642, except for a casual reference to its deterioration later in the seventeenth century, when it was given up to 'improper comedies and heroic plays.' It is only unfortunate that such a shaping of the story of English Literature seems to justify the suspicion—so often found in the minds of historians and economists and philosophers—that the student of literature, at any rate in Canadian Universities, is primarily concerned with what is aesthetic and literary in the narrowest sense, and spends his time in tasting only the most pleasing and the most innocuous lucubrations of poets and novelists, critics and essayists.

H. J. DAVIS

#### AN ALIEN MEDIUM

SYNGE AND ANGLO-IRISH LITERATURE, by Daniel Corkery (Longmans Green; pp. ix, 247; \$3.00).

THIS book is a better commentary on Synge than on Anglo-Irish, or what the world knows as 'Irish', literature, but some of its remarks about Anglo-Irish writers should have a certain interest for the Anglo-Canadian. Mr. Corkery points

out the dangers of training a writer from his schooldays in the traditions of what is virtually a foreign language, to read of English life and to ignore the life he sees about him. He is given an alien medium through which to look at his own land, and so unfitted to write of it. It has meant that Irish writers have always become expatriates or else attached themselves to some little group in Dublin which wrote for English or foreign markets. Consequently Ireland has never had its George Eliot, Thackeray, Wells, or Galsworthy to represent its 'homeliness', the folk who work the land, crowd to hurling-matches, the fair, the 'priesting.' No one has bothered to analyze native environment and character in reaction to it.

To this flesh and blood Ireland the poetry of the Celtic Revival school, A.E.'s 'skinny sidhe' and 'the timid flirtations with Celtic mythology' of Mr. Yeats and himself and their 'clever' Dublin set are utterly alien-minded. They are too exotic and sophisticated to be capable of further growth, as much an impertinence as the grotesque pictures of rollicking Irishmen of Prout, Lever and Co. The Abbey Theatre work from 1902 to 1922 was sincere enough *in intention* but mostly amateur. The best of its writers have long since turned their eyes to foreign markets.

It is against a background of such Anglo-Irish writers that Mr. Corkery sets J. M. Synge, rather to one's surprise. For surely, one thinks, the man who lived with the people of the glens and who felt that the timber of poetry should have 'strong roots among the clay and worms', can never be accused of reducing Irish literature to literary formulae, mockery, or prettiness.

But Mr. Corkery will only grant Synge access to the peasant's hut, not to the understanding of his heart. He warmly appreciates his courage in venturing there, but not even he 'represents' the Irish people. Instead, he turned the mass-going Aran Islanders into pagans and wild patricides, collected a common lot of tinker folk from Wicklow and Kerry with not a rag of religion among the lot. His eye was earthbound. He lacked fine sensitiveness. He hankered for beautiful women with rude health and a feeling for ditches. The choice of a sick man obviously, yearning for life. In short, his whole work with the exception of *Riders to the Sea* is an apology for the daemonic in life, and this in a land swayed by religion and the selfless spirit of patriotism.

In the same way he turned Irish speech into 'gaudy' lyric phrases which stopper-up the mouths of his actors. Lyric phrases according to Mr. Corkery are inevitably undramatic, but then Mr. Corkery is avowedly unsympathetic to Synge's whole imaginative view of life and art. That shock of joy in the blood, Synge's sole aim in art, is for him on the level with the glow from poteen.

The trouble with this book is that sectarian religion and national vanity have warped what might have been, and is, as far as the Essays are concerned, a very fine critical appreciation, often in Synge's own lyrical vein. The author is so often right but not for all of the reasons he gives.

The *Riders to the Sea* and *Deirdre* are richer than *The Playboy* or *The Well of the Saints*, but not because the people are worthier representatives of the Irish and the dialogue nearer living speech. Immediacy of language, yes, but that can coincide with 'poetry talk.' It does so here. These plays excel because Synge beat into their music the full share of that desolation that he saw mixed with the supreme beauty of the world—a grandeur he had to find as much in his own soul as in the gray rock of Aran, or in the Wicklow Hills. The whole criticism is warped throughout by a misconception of 'representation' in art. Why should you and how can you 'represent' in drama any more than in a picture? Hardy's Wessex never existed, nor Thackeray's London, nor Tchekoff's county society. Then surely the best training for the Anglo-Irish writer—or the Anglo-Canadian—is first what makes him most familiar with his subject but equally what makes him see most in it. And this may, or may not be, a 'foreign' training. It depends on the spiritual wealth of the country in question.

GLADYS DAVIS

## TEMPERED ENTHUSIASM

COUNTRIES OF THE MIND; First Series, by J. Middleton Murry (Oxford University Press; pp. vi, 192; \$2.50).

COUNTRIES OF THE MIND; Second Series, by J. Middleton Murry (Oxford University Press; pp. 205; \$2.50).

THESE two volumes contain various critical articles, most of them originally contributed to the *Times Literary Supplement*. The first collection has appeared before; the second is new. Together, they present a valuable series of typically modern approaches to outstanding figures in English and French literature.

I say 'typically modern approaches'. But Mr. Middleton Murry's work is often typical only of himself. In his more elaborate studies—'Keats and Shakespeare', for example, 'God', or 'Son of Woman'—he makes greater claims for his own peculiar and personal intuitions, and drives them to far greater lengths, than in any of these essays. Here he writes judicially, responsibly, with consideration and care. His criticism is, indeed, based throughout on faith in the final validity of personal judgment; he tends to reject canons of art, traditional dogmas in any field, and all rigid intellectual formulations. But he carefully explicates his emotional responses in more or less rational terms. Where we know the author he writes of, he usually appears just, his tempered enthusiasm is engaging, his occasional hostility not without sobriety. Where we are ignorant, we can learn from him with ease and pleasure.

And yet these essays lack something. They serve admirably the purpose for which they were originally written, but hardly make an exciting book. There is an intellectual level they do not sound. Here the expression is careful and rational but colourless, the statements generalized and vague. The writing does not catch fire. Elsewhere, in his longer works, Mr. Murry goes

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deeper, but there his method often appears exaggerated, intellectually relaxed, unduly personal. The same weakness is at the root of both styles. Mr. Murry fails to use intellectual and symbolical expression—in which I would include metaphor—at a profound level. He can be either rational, and, if we grant his critical premises, impersonal, or profound and personal; but not both at once. He refuses to formulate the deeper emotions with precision, probably because he is too much afraid of not telling the truth. But truth may be composed of a myriad of falsehoods, and the bold writer turns out one profound lie after another unashamedly. That is what we mean by 'style'. For no direct statement about anything can possibly be true in any final sense unless vitalized by the motive power of feeling; and when it is so vitalized every statement will be, in its own direction, dynamic, and holds truth by virtue of its profundity. Mr. Murry's style is inadequate to his intuition.

Mr. Murry fears intellect like the very devil. His fears are partly justified. Intellect, when it usurps autonomy, is truly diabolical. It has no natural royalty to which we should offer obedience; by nature it is parasitic, adjectival, servile. It is a glass through which we may focus reality; or as a prism to split the unsearchable golden fire into blending tints. Or again, we may call it the metallic case compressing the power of emotion; without such compression there is no explosion. It is all these mutually exclusive things and more. And only by such contradictions as these may we ever attempt to formulate the mysterious and the expressible. Therefore the tight intellectual statement, paradox, metaphor or symbol is refused at our peril; there is diffusion, no report and reverberation of phrase, or impact of idea and image. These things Mr. Murry renounces—it used not to be so in the days when he wrote his fine study of Dostoevsky—in the name of 'truth'.

Intellect, like the devil himself, is a dangerous master but an invaluable servant. Mr. Murry will not make terms with the intellectual mammon of unrighteousness. It therefore, in different ways, still dominates, instead of serving, his vision.

G. WILSON KNIGHT

### THE END OF IT ALL

THE GAS WAR OF 1940, by 'Miles' (Scholartis Press; pp. 302; 7/6).

LAST AND FIRST MEN, by W. Olaf Stapledon (Cape-Nelson; pp. 371; \$2.50).

ALL recent histories of the future are desperate. No one, it seems, can follow out in imagination the logical consequences of the present international situation without being convinced of a sort of mass-insanity moving wilfully, helplessly, stupidly into world-suicide. Mankind has created problems beyond its power to solve; modern civilization is suffering from the failure of nerve-force that sent the Greco-Roman world down before the barbarians: with this difference, that there seem to be no reliable barbarians left

to build a new world, unless the catastrophe comes too soon to drag Central Africa down with the rest of humanity.

*The Gas War of 1940* portrays with horrid plausibility the various uneasy little poppings of conflict all over the world after 1930, as poison gas, aircraft, and mutual distrust are being steadily developed among the great powers, until a frivolous outburst of irresponsible violence drags all the nations of the world, large and small, into an insane welter of poison gas and high explosive, in which all organization, political and financial, vanishes, leaving a small remnant of survivors attempting to patch things up for a new start. It is a deliberately shocking story, and gruesomely persuasive in its picture of the utter triviality of the motives that launch such disaster. The action is rapid and sweeping, with the emotional tension cleverly pointed and sustained by numerous effective close-ups, hindering any too pedantic checking-up of plausibility in detail. A terrifying and depressing book, but a fascinating and salutary one.

*Last and First Men*, though its author terms it an essay in myth, is a much more serious, more ambitious, and more philosophic work, with a simply amazing imaginative fertility. The interest is much more psychological than material. The first hundred pages sketch rapidly the course of events for some three hundred and eighty years after the war of 1914-1918, during which the self-destruction of a Balkanized Europe leads to the disappearance of France and England as great powers, and the consequent loss to civilization of self-criticism on a really broad scale. A Russo-German conflict increases American financial domination and European resentment, till at last America practically wipes out Europe, and stands face to face with China. These two ultimately reach an agreement in a world-state dominated by a curiously restricted mentality, the product of the baser but more powerful characteristics of Americanization, in which the pure life of the intellect is displaced by a religious cult of Energy, with all sorts of fantastic survivals of misunderstood earlier ideas. This world endures in ever-increasing comfort, and depletion of resources and real intellectual power, for some five thousand years, when its organization breaks down under a failure of power, and a great dark age begins. The book is worth reading, merely for the sensitive and disciplined imaginative development of these first pages.

It is after this, however, that the author really gets into his stride, making the wildest fancies of Jules Verne and H. G. Wells seem timid and schoolboyish. The book is too packed with matter to make it possible to trace its development in detail; it must suffice to say that the bulk of the book is a fascinating study of the various possibilities that arise from the especial development of the various faculties and tendencies of the human mind and body.

The central thought of the book is one of undeniable grandeur—that perhaps the whole history of mankind is essentially tragic, and to



be judged by the canons of tragic art, repudiating the happy ending we try to sew on to it. We should rather find stimulus in admiring and fulfilling the great aesthetic conception.

L. A. MACKAY

### THREE LITERARY STUDIES

CHARLES READE, by Malcolm Elwin (Capel-Nelson; pp. 388; \$4.25).

A CONSIDERATION OF THACKERAY, by George Saintsbury (Oxford University Press; pp. 273; \$2.50).

J. FENIMORE COOPER, CRITIC OF HIS TIMES, by R. E. Spiller (Thomas Allen; pp. 337; \$4.00).

OF these three studies Mr. Elwin's comprehensive and penetrating biography of Charles Reade will be the most immediately valuable. His task was an exacting one. Reade sometimes delighted in mystification and seldom used his own nature or actions with any justice; and his contemporaries whether in incidental references or in elaborate presentations obscured him in a fog of legend. Mr. Elwin painstakingly checks all that his predecessors—his precursors one might say—have claimed; and he himself claims nothing that he cannot clearly prove. His scepticism is so complete that at times it becomes a weakness and leaves in scattered fragments what might have been a convincing whole. Most readers will come to Mr. Elwin's book conceiving Reade as the novelist of *The Cloister and the Hearth*, *It is Never Too Late to Mend* and, just possibly, *Very Hard Cash*; Mr. Elwin will greatly surprise them, for his Reade is a dramatist rather than a novelist. Reade's novels are presented as marginal performances, done sometimes merely to get money in for expensive and precarious ventures in the theatre and germinating very often from dramatic material. To take Reade as primarily a writer for the stage is to explain a number of the traits of his fiction, those traits which do not very well suit the blue-book-and-reformer novelist that we usually imagine him. Mr. Elwin has added an important chapter to the history of the relations between the English play and the English novel, relations which from Fielding to Galsworthy have been more shaping to both than most of us perceive.

Another biography of Fenimore Cooper was reviewed in these columns a few months ago, a biography which aimed specially at constructing a life-like image of Cooper the individual. Mr. Spiller's book is complementary; its excellence is in its connection of Cooper with his time, not only as a critic but as a product and a type of it. Mr. Spiller's method of composition is supremely honest; the book is made before our eyes; and if this method is without charm, it has the great virtue of separating fact from conjecture and conjecture from legend.

Mr. Saintsbury's 'consideration' is in the main a reprint of material a quarter-century old, namely his introductions to the Oxford edition of his author. The gravest defect of his book is one inherent in its plan; the introductions were

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all of about the same length and in the present volume *Philip* and the *Virginians* are allotted as much space as any of the four great novels. A lack of proportion, a false perspective, is inevitable; equally inevitable is a sense that the critic is spinning out his account of the least rewarding and suggestive books and papers by setting out across country after the first likely hare. Highly as Mr. Saintsbury esteems Thackeray's craft and style, for the part of Thackeray's mind which was occupied with matters outside the writing of fiction he appears to have a somewhat grandfatherly contempt. On religious and political affairs in particular he finds Thackeray's ideas to have been loose and confused and a little dangerous; but we have long known that the only salvation for an artist who came up for judgment before Mr. Saintsbury was to have no ideas at all or use the impossible one of his judge.

E. K. BROWN

#### THE IMPACT OF ASIA

A HISTORY OF THE FIRST BULGARIAN EMPIRE, by Steven Runciman (G. Bell—Clarke, Irwin & Co.; pp. xii, 337; \$4.80).

THE *First Bulgarian Empire* is somewhat remote from the ordinary course of Canadian life and thought. For this reason Mr. Runciman's book will probably not receive the attention in this country that it deserves. Bulgarians will welcome it. Scholars will welcome it—as the first monograph in a West-European language on a subject which experience has shown cannot be safely left to Balkan historians yet which is of such importance in Byzantine studies that, as the late Professor Bury wrote in his edition of the *Decline and Fall*, the two pages which Gibbon devoted to it are quite inadequate and 'today the author of a history . . . on the same scale would find two hundred a strict limit.' But the general reading public will need an introduction.

The most striking feature of the post-war settlement of Europe is the recognition accorded to the aspirations of the nationalities of Central Europe. These derive their force in most cases from memories of a great and independent past. Bulgaria, too, has its traditions. The First Bulgarian Empire from about A.D. 680 to 1019 was a power in Eastern Europe and a dangerous neighbour of the Byzantine Empire.

A militant Bulgar aristocracy ruling over a Slav population, it illustrates not only within itself that process of the mixing of peoples which has made the European nations of today, but also, as a whole, that impact of Asiatic peoples upon European society which, until the frontier was secured in comparatively modern times, has played so large a part in the development of Western civilization.

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It was under pressure from the Huns, Mongol nomads from Central Asia from whom the later Bulgars traced, and modern Bulgarians trace, their descent, that the Germanic peoples first broke into the Roman Empire in force in the early years of the fifth century: it was under further pressure from all quarters, but particularly from the East, that they had to set about ordering their new home, fusing Roman with German and evolving new institutions to govern the new society. The present society of European peoples with their common civilization, common culture and common institutions, and the energy which they have displayed in modern times in world-conquest, are tribute to the soundness with which the work was done. But it might not have taken so long, certainly it would not be what it is, but for the weakness of the Eastern frontier, the necessity of organization for defence thus imposed upon European society in the period of its growth, and for the infiltration of Asiatic peoples. Mr. Runciman's book is a study of a particular aspect and a particular period of this process.

Approached in this way, it has something to offer the most ardent and unhistorical of Canadian nationalists: the spectacle of our parent-civilization of Europe, on a greater scale and with greater difficulties, moving towards unity, maturity and individuality, by the only means by which we can achieve a vigorous breed and a culture that will be at once great and distinctively Canadian—the mixing of our peoples and the realizing of all the potentialities of our diversity. They will, moreover, enjoy reading it—which cannot be said of all works as sound in scholarship.

H. ROTHWELL

#### LITERARY RESEARCH

FRANCISCAN PHILOSOPHY AT OXFORD IN THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY, by D. E. Sharp (Oxford University Press; pp. vi, 419; \$6.25).

IN form and matter, as the good Aristotelians say, in subject and treatment, this is primarily a book for the specialist. The author deals with great men; with Robert Grosseteste, the learned Bishop of Lincoln; with Roger Bacon, hero of science and centre of prolific myth-making; with Duns Scotus, the subtle doctor, whose reputed works are still badly mixed up and demand the greatest care for their critical interpretation. There are others in this book, but these examples will be enough. For those who have the interest and the necessary training, this will be a book to get and study. But the number of those who have either interest or training will certainly not be large, and the majority will be scholars trained in the schools of the Roman Catholics. Even such an attractive head-line as Psychology will prove to many an illusion when they find it covers such questions as whether or not there is spiritual matter in the Soul; so far is this from Behaviourism!

The readers of THE CANADIAN FORUM will have inferred already, and correctly, that this is

not a book which can profitably be reviewed in any but a technical journal. But there is a sentence in the book on which we may base some remarks, at the cost of being considerably disproportionate in the treatment. In the Preface the author acknowledges her obligations 'to the University Women of Canada'. Dr. Sharp was in fact a student at the University of Toronto for several years and took the degrees of B.A. and M.A. at that University. The award of a research fellowship founded by the University Women of Canada opened up the wider opportunities of Oxford and Europe. From the standpoint of scholarship probably no better candidate has been chosen; the wisdom of creating these fellowships has been strikingly proved and it is fitting that this material assistance should be fully recognized now when the generosity of Canadian women has made possible such unique results. In the nature of the case Canada could not produce work of this kind; the material is remote and obscure; the kind of scholarship which it involves belongs to ancient institutions of learning and to those places where the mediaeval scholars themselves lived and died. But it is pardonable here to explain, for those who might not suspect it, that this book has a rather unusual interest for Canadians because the writer went out from our midst, will be remembered by many, and has fully justified the expectations of those who believed that no one was more worthy to receive the help they were able to give. The crown of the achievement is this book which has been published with the aid of the British Academy, the British Society of Franciscan Studies, and the Committee of Advanced Studies in Oxford. The fact that such disinterested and learned societies as these were anxious to secure the publication of Dr. Sharp's work is in itself a tribute not to be increased by any further praise. Nothing remains but to read the book and discover what are its actual merits.

G. S. BRETT



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## SHORT NOTICES

**MAHATMA GANDHI AT WORK**, His Own Story Continued, edited by C. F. Andrews (Allen and Unwin; pp. 407; \$3.75).

**MR. GANDHI, THE MAN**, by Millie Graham Polak (Allen and Unwin; pp. 186; \$1.30 and \$1.00).

Both these books deal with Gandhi's life in South Africa between 1893 and 1914. The two together cover his public work for the Indians resident in South Africa, the trial by fire and victory of the principle of Satyagraha or Soul-force, Gandhi's private life during these years and the development of his views on personal and national righteousness. In passing it is of interest to note that he looks back upon the months spent at Tolstoy Farm in 1910 to 1912 as marking the highest point of his faith and courage.

Mrs. Polak's book is of rare quality. She combines profound admiration with a perfectly poised self-reliance, and illuminates the figure of Gandhi as much by her humorous criticism as by her sympathy. For some years she knew him intimately, sharing the life of his community at Phoenix and later at Tolstoy Farm, and at another time taking him into her own home in Johannesburg. She records many scraps of conversation and many incidents of every day human contacts, and makes it quite clear that it would be easy to disagree with most of what he said and very hard to withhold admiration for almost everything that he did.

Mrs. Polak has left to Gandhi himself the story of the struggle for the decent recognition of Orientals in South Africa. In this continuation of his autobiography, he devotes himself to an account of the theory and practice of Satyagraha as it developed in South Africa under his leadership. It is a story of intense national feeling which led to no violent expression. National pride asserted itself by the simple method of disobedience. The principle is that unjust laws must not be obeyed. The weapon of resistance is organized non-compliance. The immediate consequence is wholesale imprisonment; the ultimate consequence is repeal of the unjust law. The whole story is beautifully complete and works out exactly as Gandhi believed that it would. Consistent disobedience, consistent self-control and non-violence carried on indefinitely at whatever

cost, and your cause is won. This Gandhi believes to be the inevitable march of events. And history has still to prove him to be wrong.

One comment on the two books places us on the side of Mrs. Polak in some of her arguments with him. Apparently he often told her to trust her heart rather than her head. But where would his poor South Africa Indians have been if they had trusted their own hearts (which had more reason to hate than to love) instead of Gandhi's head? If ever there was a case where the 'theoric' was the mistress of 'the art and practice part of life' it was in Gandhi's calculated victory in South Africa.

M. A. F.

**A STUDY IN AESTHETICS**, by Louis Arnaud Reid (Allen & Unwin; pp. 415; 15/-).

This is an excellent book on what the author admits is an 'almost impossible' subject. It follows the best tradition of English philosophy in steering a middle course between the Charybdis of pure abstraction and the Scylla of observed facts. Firmly basing itself on the actual aesthetic experience, it addresses itself to the critic and the artist as well as to the philosopher; yet there are long passages of strenuous dialectic which will test the intellectual muscles of the average reader. The general point of view is close to that of Croce, but it is characteristic of Mr. Reid that he refuses to identify 'expression' with 'intuition' and to regard the aesthetic act as already complete in the artist's mind before it has been 'embodied' in any outer form. For Mr. Reid the character of the 'form' so influences the 'content' that not till the two have been successfully reconciled can you be said to have a work of art. Mr. Reid's discussion of 'value' is highly technical but interesting and original, and it follows from his theory of value that he finds it hard to deny that, in the last analysis, 'beauty' may be only a relative term. The term 'truth' he disposes of as inapposite to aesthetic objects as they do not state a proposition.

So far Mr. Reid seems not to have strayed very far from the Crocean fold. In the later chapters his deflection becomes more serious. He thoroughly believes in aesthetic 'kinds,' and the moral aspect of art interests him tremendously. He believes that 'greatness' in art is a matter, not of form,

but of content. He has an interesting chapter on what he calls 'the competition of interests in works of art' and another on 'the enigma of natural beauty.'

Mr. Reid's book has the qualities and defects of eclectic thinking. It is broad, sane, suggestive, and stimulating; but at the end one is a little in doubt whether, as to the great topics like 'beauty' and 'art,' one has really pushed the frontiers of ignorance much farther back. Mr. Reid's illustrations from actual works of art are not very abundant, and the modern aestheticians and critics he quotes are (apart from Croce) mainly English ones; continental aesthetics is pretty well ignored. As for his style, Mr. Reid often sacrifices grace to explicitness.

A.F.B.C.

**FRAGRANT WISDOM**, by Marion Isabel Angus (Vancouver Bindery; pp. 63).

**ROSES OF SHADOW**, by Elsie Aylen (Macmillans in Canada; pp. 56; \$1.50).

**BEYOND THE ROAD'S END**, by Warwick Chipman (J. M. Dent & Sons; pp. 39; \$1.00).

**SONGS OF CARTHAGE and Other Poems**, by Lewis Wharton (Overbrook Press; pp. 61).

I wish someone would show me a way of dealing with such verse as this which would be both fair and interesting. With good poetry it is possible to let one's enthusiasm go unchecked. With really bad verse the possibilities are still wider. But the competence of tolerable verse is a problem which I have not yet solved—and that is the problem presented by this group.

It would be a little unjust to dismiss these volumes as entirely unimportant. None of them, it is true, is likely to prove a landmark in Canadian poetry. Yet most of them reveal enough merit to suggest the possibility of further development, and even such faint signs are not to be neglected. There is a gracefulness of expression in many of the verses by Mrs. Angus, a compact pictorial quality in the best of Miss Aylen's poems, a competence of execution in those by Mr. Chipman, which I should be reluctant to overlook. If these qualities could be developed to a fuller degree, they might prove definitely worthy of attention.

At present, however, they remain indications rather than achievement in its fuller sense. Too many of the

poems are slight in content and either banal or strained in expression. The occasional slight stirring of pleasure with which one encounters a happy phrase is far more rare than the dreary impression of the writer's unhappy failure to find the inevitable word which would express his thought. And only too often there is a straining for effect, full of sound and fury which wholly fails to conceal a complete lack of significance. There might be hope from some of these writers if they ever find anything vital to say. Lacking that, their work is hardly strong enough to stand purely on its slender merits.

E.M.

**THE EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF HENRY JAMES**, by Cornelia Pulsifer Kelley (University of Illinois Press; \$2.00).

To understand the early Henry James, Dr. Kelley told herself, one had to go back to his youthful writings which lie hidden in the files of the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *Nation*, the *North American Review*, and elsewhere. One had to go even further—one had to read all that the youthful Henry read, and the youthful Henry, we may judge, was a voracious reader. And so Dr. Kelley ranged through a large body of nineteenth-century literature, American, English, French, German, in an effort to trace, as far as possible, the influences to which Henry James was exposed between 1864 and 1881.

The most serious error in this study of James's intellectual formation, it seems to the present writer, is in Dr. Kelley's neglect of the theatre, which from early childhood filled an important place in James's life. Knowing that James later devoted five years to dramatic writing, Dr. Kelley should have indicated what 'dramatic' seeds had already been sown in young James. The three early 'farces,' the dramatized *Daisy Miller*, all figure in this period, but they have been practically ignored, as has the large body of criticism James wrote of the theatres of London and Paris, and the references to the theatre in his travel notes.

Dr. Kelley might have attempted to indicate more fully the possible influence of the older Henry James on his son during these years of apprenticeship. And there are points at which she has ignored possible sources

in life for the early stories, in her attempt to find the books from which James derived them. Dr. Kelley points out that we have not been given sufficient material about James's early life. A summer's sojourn in Cambridge yielded her little. There may have been notebooks, perhaps early diaries, there must be many early letters. Few have been forthcoming, the theory being that James's rambling, beautiful autobiographical volumes fill the gap. Beautiful they are, but not always accurate; and Dr. Kelley quite justifiably implies that it is discouraging to do research of this kind in the face of so many lacunae, which might have been filled in had not the literary executors marked out such rigid boundaries for the collection of James's letters. It is an admirable collection: so much so that we cannot be blamed for asking for more.

L.E.

**RETROSPECTS OF A NEWSPAPER PERSON**, by Philip Danaken Ross (Oxford University Press; pp. 327; \$2.00).

The *Ottawa Journal* has such an amusing and dashing way of being wrong on so many subjects that one would have expected a more interesting lot of reminiscences from its proprietor. The best part of this book is in the stories about athletics and games. On politics it is pretty dull. Most Canadians who take part in

public affairs and then write their reminiscences have so little to say that one wonders, with every new book of the kind, what is the mysterious zest which they get out of the political game. Apparently, to write a good book, one needs to be bitter and vitriolic like Sir Richard Cartwright or Mr. W. T. R. Preston. Only Sir John Willison has succeeded in being urbane and interesting at the same time. There must be a moral about Canadian politics to be extracted from this peculiar phenomenon.

F. H. U.

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**THE ARCHITECT OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE, 27 B.C.-14 A.D.,** by T. Rice Holmes (Oxford University Press; pp. x, 192; \$4.00).

Dr. Holmes tells us in his preface that 'this volume, a continuation of one published in 1928 with the same title, but dealing only with the period 44-27 B.C., is the writer's final historical work.' Every student of Roman history will regret deeply the fact that physical infirmities compel the great Oxford historian to abandon his labours. The present volume will establish him still higher in our regard, and place us more deeply in his debt than ever.

Anyone who has ever attempted to study the age of Augustus will be filled with amazement and admiration at the skill with which Dr. Holmes has woven a coherent and eminently readable narrative out of the 'incomplete and disjointed historical materials' available. Each province of the nascent Empire had its own particular problems, and there was no rule-of-thumb that could be applied alike in Egypt and in Achaia, in Asia and in Spain; and for large sections of the empire the lines of imperial policy can be drawn only by piecing together the information derived from a close study of a large number of inscriptions. But Dr. Holmes has tried to do more than discover and outline the policy of Augustus; he has attempted the seemingly impossible task of making a living figure out of the impersonal Princes—'that cold, unbending Caesar.' I do not know that he has succeeded. To me at least, Augustus remains as much a Sphinx as ever.

Dr. Holmes has given us a great book; there is simply nothing to match it in existence. It is not too much to say that he has done what Mommsen declined to attempt—he has given a genuine unity to the early Empire. One is inclined to feel, however, that his outlook is influenced by the fact that he is ever so much more familiar with the literary sources for the period than with the non-literary. One gets the impression that most of his acquaintance with the inscriptions and papyri is gained second-hand. At any rate, he has not succeeded in freeing himself from the erroneous preconception imparted by the ancient men of letters, that the Roman Empire was first of all Roman and only accidentally an Empire; and as a consequence he gives quite undue importance to Rome and Italy and to the paraphernalia of constitutionalism with which

Augustus surrounded himself for the sole benefit of the old folks at home.

It would be a pleasure to be initiated into the methods of high finance that translate an English price of twelve and six into four Canadian dollars.

F. W. B.

**CROMWELL AND COMMUNISM; Socialism and Democracy in the Great English Revolution,** by Eduard Bernstein. Translated by H. J. Stenning (George Allen & Unwin Ltd.; pp. 287; \$2.50).

Like so many excellent translations of important works the first title is a publisher's afterthought and bears little relation to the contents of the book. Cromwell is but a shadowy figure in the pages of Bernstein's masterly work, unless the reader wishes to consider him the symbol of the military man and the landed proprietor with all the soldier's contempt for agitators and all the gentleman's hatred of the lower orders. As for Communism, if one excepts some of the semi-utopian theories propounded by the sect of the True Levellers, there were but scant traces of that social philosophy in the English Civil War.

What did exist, and what Bernstein brings out to the full, is the presence of sharp class antagonism which clashed even before the monarchy was finally overthrown. What handicapped these 17th century leaders of the proletariat was undoubtedly their religious mysticism; their promised land was Biblical rather than practical, and anyway, Cromwell, Fairfax, the Independents, and the London Train Bands were too strong for them.

One of the most valuable features in Bernstein's book is his comprehensive treatment of such elusive and fascinating figures as Winstanley, Lilburne, Peter Cornelius Blockboy and John Bellers.

F.H.W.

**THE SPIRIT OF BRITISH POLICY, and the Myth of the Encirclement of Germany,** by Hermann Kantorowicz (Allen and Unwin; pp. 540; 25/).

This is a remarkable study by an eminent professor of law in a German University. The author states his purpose in writing it clearly and forcibly in his introduction:—

In view of what a future war would mean, we may claim that today, if not always, the highest in-

terest of the peoples is *Peace*. And we cannot count on peace so long as the peoples look at each other through the spectacles of baseless preconceptions. To this end it was necessary to remove some of the more important misconceptions of England, especially those of German origin.

The principal misconceptions which Professor Kantorowicz attempts to remove is that England laboured before the war to 'encircle' Germany. He does this from accepted and adequate sources, both German and English. But he is led to precede this Essay in diplomatic history by a more general survey of British characteristics, as revealed in the study of their history and institutions during the last century or more. Thus the larger part of his profoundly interesting volume is made up of chapters on Chivalry, Objectivity (by which he means impartiality and sportsmanship), Humanitarianism, and Irrationality, by which last he means the lack of a continually pursued and logical system of foreign policy. The author is extremely appreciative of England and things English, without being in the least fulsome or uncritical. The book was written for German and not for English readers, to enlighten Germany and not to praise England. It is in effect an attempt to reshape German opinion after the Bismarckian and post-Bismarckian period, in accord with the point of view of a new age.

R. F.

**POETS AND PLAYWRIGHTS,** by E. E. Stoll (University of Minnesota Press; pp. 304; \$3.00).

This admirable collection of nine essays on the supreme masters of English literature in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries presents Professor Stoll in quite a new light. In his *Shakespeare Studies* he revealed himself as an adherent of the strictest sect of literary investigators; now he writes as a critic—a dogmatist rather than an impressionist—and interrupts his argument here and there to ironize his former friends. The source-hunters, the parallel-seekers, the heretics-at-any-price are impaled and left to grin at us in a marvellously sickly way. As a whole, the book is rich in good sense, in learning, in grace, and in force. Few scholars have adjusted the exposition of a familiar subject to the point of view of a specific audience as cunningly as Professor Stoll with his Vassar lecture on Spenser. The lecture has



other and perhaps more serious merits—here is an extraordinary precise formulation of Spenser's romanticism, a new emphasis upon his power as a creator of character, and upon his sense of single dramatic scenes elaborated as much as the action will bear. Professor Stoll's passage from the camp of the investigators to the camp of the critics will have a considerable effect; not only is he the head of one of the preeminent English faculties of the continent; he is a spirited polemist and a past master of the gentle art of formulation.

E.K.B.

LOCKE, BERKELEY, HUME, by C. R. Morris (Oxford University Press; pp. 174; \$1.75).

This study aims, among other things, to rescue three figures from the tidal 'movement' known as 'empiricism' in which they have long been submerged. The task is pursued with competence; the survivors are treated so critically afterwards, however, that the onlooker may well wonder if the salvage was worth the trouble! The treatment is selective, for the life and works of a personage are to be recorded in some sixty pages; and its peculiar form of selectivity is governed by the principles of post-Wundtian psychology; naturally, therefore, much of the exegesis consists in pointing out the inadequacies of such premature analysts as Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. Readers who have already acquainted themselves with the thought of the eighteenth century will find the commentary clear, stimulating, and conversant with scholarly findings; the discussion of Hume is especially meritorious. Others would, perhaps, derive greater profit from an introduction which presented these thinkers in closer and more sympathetic relationship to the epistemological searchings of their contemporaries among whom they appeared as prophets.

F.H.A.

THEORIES OF POPULATION FROM RALEIGH TO ARTHUR YOUNG. The Newmarch Lectures for 1929, by James Bonar (George Allen & Unwin; pp. 258; 1016).

Professor Bonar's lectures have much in common with the previous work. While they have the brevity and sometimes the awkwardness of the spoken word, they are essentially a history of thought. To isolate thought on demography, on mortality

tables for insurance purposes, and on population problems as a whole, would have been unwise in dealing with the tangled course of thought in recent times. But in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, in the earliest infancy of economics, demography and insurance risks were the pursuit of the curious as much as of the scientific, and proceeded without much relation to the unsystematized economic thought of the time. The names of Graunt, Süssmilch, Halley, and Webster are hardly known to economists. Of the writers mentioned, only Petty, Hume, and Arthur Young are familiar. That quantitative economics, even in such a specialized and technical branch as demography, is not the creation of professional economists, but of amateurs and scholars

in other branches, is once more demonstrated. Halley was the well-known astronomer; Graunt a religious London councillor who had been a haberdasher.

These lectures disclose a cross-section of Europe's brainwork on an intricate economic problem, which might just as well describe 1930 as 1630. Most writers begin in the dark, unaware of either predecessors or contemporaries, see a very little light, but sometimes produce sparks in controversy with others as ignorant as themselves. That is all, apart from the work of an occasional laborious scholar.

The chapters cover more than is suggested by the title. Thoughts on population are so confused with the Utopias of the Renaissance and with

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the early experiments in collecting and treating statistics, that if confined to population alone there would be three chapters instead of eight. The section on Hume deals with the exaggerated estimates of the population of the ancient world current in his time, exaggerations that must have done much to foster the view that all succeeding history was retrogression.

There is nothing in these lectures to lower the position of Malthus as an inventor and formulator of economic thought. The sparse and fugitive generalizations of his predecessors throw his work into all the more prominence. Malthus may not have made the study of population scientific, but he at least made it systematic. Only the German padre Süssmilch had reached that level of thought before him.

D. C. MACG

#### BOOKS RECEIVED

*The listing of a book in this column does not preclude a more extended notice in this or subsequent issues.*

#### CANADIAN

**NORTHWARD ON THE NEW FRONTIER**, by D. M. LeBourdais (Graphic Publishers; pp. 311; \$3.50).

**MURDERS AND MYSTERIES**, by W. Stewart Wallace (Macmillans in Canada; pp. 333; \$3.00).

**THE HOUSE OF TEMPTATION**, by Veros Carleton (Graphic; pp. 354; \$2.00).

**IF I WERE KING OF CANADA**, by Oliver Stowell (J. M. Dent; pp. 173; \$1.50).

**A DRYAD IN NANAIMO**, by Audrey Alexandra Brown (Macmillans in Canada; pp. vi, 70; \$2.00).

**THE IMPERIAL THEME**, by G. Wilson Knight (Oxford University Press; pp. ix, 367; \$4.00).

**PETER POND, FUR TRADER AND ADVENTURER**, by H. A. Innis (Irwin & Gordon; pp. xi, 153; \$3.00).

**THE CANADIAN GRAPHIC ART YEAR BOOK** (Ryerson Press; \$1.50).

#### GENERAL

**PROTECTION AND FREE TRADE**, by L. M. Fraser (Hogarth Press; pp. vii, 52; 1/6).

**SADO**, by William Plomer (Hogarth Press; pp. 273; 7/6).

**THE MYSTERY OF LIFE**, by Prof. J. B. Butler Burke (Elkin Mathews & Marrot; pp. 159; 3/6).

**DINNER WITH JAMES**, by Rose Heniker Heaton (Elkin Mathews & Marrot; pp. 243; 6/-).

**CALIGULA**, by Hans Sachs (Elkin Mathews & Marrot; pp. v, 224; 7/6).

**REALM OF LIGHT**, by Nicholas Roerich (Roerich Museum Press; pp. xiv, 333; \$3.00).

**ISSA, A Poem**, by Robert Norwood (Scribner Press—Macmillans in Canada; pp. xiv, 95; \$2.50).

**THUNDER BELOW**, by Thomas Rourke (Farrar & Rinehart; pp. 292; \$2.50).

**SARAH DEFIANT**, by Mary Borden (Doubleday, Doran and Gundy; pp. 310; \$2.50).

**MODERN CIVILIZATION ON TRIAL**, by C. Delisle Burns (Macmillans in Canada; pp. xi, 324; \$3.00).

**MATTHIAS AT THE DOOR**, by Edwin Arlington Robinson (Macmillans in Canada; pp. 99; \$2.00).

**THE THEORY OF DRAMA**, by Allardyce Nicoll (George Harrap-Clarke, Irwin; pp. 261; \$2.50).

**THE THEATRE**, by J. W. Marriott (George Harrap-Clarke, Irwin; pp. 272; \$1.75).

**MISOGYNY OVER THE WEEK-END**, by Ronald McNair Scott (Macmillans in Canada; pp. 185; \$2.00).

**THE COURSE AND PHASES OF THE WORLD ECONOMIC DEPRESSION** (Secretariat of the League of Nations; pp. 337).

**MR. & MRS. PENNINGTON**, by Francis Brett Young (Doubleday, Doran & Gundy; pp. 629; \$2.50).

**RETURN I DARE NOT**, by Margaret Kennedy (Doubleday, Doran & Gundy; pp. ix, 306; \$2.50).

**RELIGIOUS ESSAYS**, by Rudolf Otto (Oxford University Press; pp. vii, 160; \$2.50).

**THE POUND STERLING**, by A. E. Feavearyear (Oxford University Press; pp. ix, 367; \$5.00).

**THE FRENCH BOY**, by Paul Vaillant Couturier (J. B. Lippincott; pp. 306; \$2.50).

**THE SOVIETS CONQUER WHEAT**, by Anna Louise Strong (McClelland & Stewart; pp. 288; \$2.75).

**J. FENIMORE COOPER, Critic of His Times**, by Robert E. Spiller (Thomas Allen; pp. xiii, 337; \$4.00).

**JUDITH PARIS**, by Hugh Walpole (Doubleday, Doran & Gundy; pp. xii, 565; \$2.50).

**DODD THE POTTER**, by Cedric Beadmore (Doubleday, Doran & Gundy; pp. x, 309; \$2.00).

**FIRST PERSON SINGULAR**, by W. Somerset Maugham (Doubleday, Doran & Gundy; pp. x, 299; \$2.50).

**ARE WE ALL MET?** by Whitford Kane (Elkin Mathews & Marrot; pp. xx, 294; 16/-).

**SOCIAL POLITICS AND MODERN DEMOCRACIES**, by Charles W. Pipkin. Vol. I (Macmillans in Canada; pp. xxxiv, 377; \$7.50).

**SOCIAL POLITICS AND MODERN DEMOCRACIES**, by Charles W. Pipkin. Vol. II (Macmillans in Canada; pp. vii, 417; \$7.50).

**A CLASSICAL DICTIONARY OF THE VULGAR TONGUE**, Edited by Eric Partridge (The Scholartis Press; pp. vii, 396; 32/-).

**MR. GANDHI: THE MAN**, by Millie Graham Polak (Allen & Unwin; pp. 186; \$1.00).

**AFTER THE DELUGE**, by Leonard Woolf. Vol. I (Hogarth Press; pp. xv, 346; 15/-).

**THE TRAP**, by Allen Havens (Hogarth Press; pp. 655; 10/6).

**THE GOLOVLYOV FAMILY**, by M. E. Shchedrin (Saltykov) (Allen & Unwin; pp. 336; \$2.00).

**THE MESSENGER OF THE SNOW**, by Ferdynand Goetel (Elkin Mathews & Marrot; pp. x, 272; 7/6).

**CATHERINE JOINS UP**, by Adrienne Thomas (Elkin Mathews & Marrot; pp. vii, 308; 7/6).

**MAHATMA GANDHI AT WORK**, His Own Story Continued, Edited by C. F. Andrews (Allen & Unwin; pp. 407; \$3.75).

**THE VALUES OF LIFE**, by Viscount Ennismore (Allen & Unwin; pp. xii, 63; \$1.00).

**THE STRUGGLE FOR SOUTH AMERICA**, by J. F. Normano (Allen & Unwin; pp. 294; \$3.75).

**ULSTER TODAY AND TOMORROW**, by Denis Ireland (Hogarth Press; pp. vii, 56; 1/6).



**REMEMBRANCE DAY**  
The Editor, THE CANADIAN FORUM.  
Sir:

I had the privilege of listening on Remembrance Day to an eloquent ad-

dress in which the speaker either stated or implied (1) that a great deal of good has come out of the war, (2) that war is the Almighty's instrument for working out a pure in-

tent,' and (3) that the said Almighty is always on the side of the British Empire. The forward-looking optimism, the true patriotic spirit, and the religious fervour of this address made such an impression on me that I have felt ever since how splendid it would be if on Remembrance Day next year speeches of a similar tone could be made at every commemoration service throughout Canada.

I should like to suggest that, in addition, a regimental chaplain, whenever possible, might offer a prayer for another war. Why should a new generation of young men not have an opportunity of sacrificing themselves in a glorious cause to make the world safe for hypocrisy, or was it democracy? (Of course we don't want to lose you, but we think you *ought* to go). And why should further blessings be mankind, watered by war's red rain, not grow as abundantly in days to come as those which have flowered the world over during the past thirteen years?

Yours militantly,

G. C. HADDOW

(Ex-Private No. 541232, 3rd Batt., C.M.G.C., C.E.F.).

#### FEDERAL POWERS

The Editor, THE CANADIAN FORUM.  
Sir:

In your issue for November there is an article by Mr. Norman McL. Rogers entitled 'Government by the Dead.' This article is a plea to Canadians to give to their federal government greater power. Mr. Rogers says, with a tone of sadness, 'Aside from the maintenance of certain essential national services like the postoffice, war pensions, banking and currency, national defence, etc., almost the entire region of social service and industrial relations belongs to or is claimed by the provinces.'

If I were a Canadian I should be extremely glad that the federal government of Canada does not have such power as has the federal government of the United States. In my country the federal government has the power to, and does, enact legislation which is distasteful to the States of the Union, and the great mass of the people are getting more and more out of touch with the seat of government.

It seems particularly apt that in another part of this same issue of your paper the Prime Minister of Canada is quoted as follows: 'As we have free-

dom, so have we justice. It is not just or right that now, or at any other time, we should permit, by word or deed, such action as may tend to unsettle confidence in the institutions and customs under which we live.'

Let us imagine that Mr. Rogers has had his wish and that the federal government has been greatly strengthened and has, at the head of it, a man of Mr. Bennett's type, one who is ready to suppress criticism of Canadian institutions and customs, one in fact whose idea of preserving freedom is to abolish it. I suggest that if the Canadians wish to keep their liberties they will not extend further power to their federal government.

Yours, etc.,

JOHN S. CODMAN.

#### MODERN SCIENCE

The Editor, THE CANADIAN FORUM.  
Sir:

I have read the review by H.D.K. of my little book, *Tendencies of Modern Science*, and I must say that while I fully realize that criticism is always deserved, I would like some further information.

One of my favourite sayings is that the words: 'In my opinion,' should preface every remark, so it horrifies me to hear that I could be considered opinionated.

The greatest lesson of science is that the world is peopled by savages or that a child can floor any of us with innumerable questions.

Your contributor suggests that there are a large number of glaring inaccuracies, but I am attempting no sarcasm when I say that the greatest desire I have in the world, is to learn. Could he give me say, three examples, of errors in this small book?

I feel very apologetic to H.D.K., but I believe that if I could have the pleasure of a few moments conversation with him I might succeed in making him modify a few of his own unintentional mistatements regarding myself.

Yours, etc.,

A. M. Low.

[H.D.K. writes:—

Professor Low asks for three examples of errors in his book. Here they are, taken almost at random. (The reviewer's italics).

1. p. 35. 'Almost every advance in medicine has resulted from the work of those outside the medical profession. *X-rays*, ultra-violet light, the

microscope, *chloroform*, *insulin*, and a hundred other modern inventions were discovered by the *public* and adapted by medicine.'

(X-rays were first demonstrated at a meeting of the Physico-Medical Society of Wurzburg in 1895, by their discoverer, Röntgen. The microscope was not a modern invention. The anaesthetic properties of chloroform (also hardly a modern discovery) were discovered by Simpson, a Scots physician; insulin was discovered by Banting and Best, two medical men).

2. p. 40. 'There is now a man comfortably walking the streets with the blood and *left leg* of another individual.'

3. p. 126. 'The furs of animals are only so much *cellulose*.'

(Furs are not made of cellulose—a carbohydrate, but of keratin—a scleroprotein, an entirely different substance belonging to a different category of compounds).

And here are three more, for good measure:

4. p. 37. 'There are at present about 400,000 men and women in the *lunatic* asylums of the British Isles.'

(In the annual report for the Metropolitan Asylums Board for 1929-1930, there were on 31st Dec., 1929, 4,426 lunatics in the asylums administered by the Board, which serve a population of 4,430,000 people. It is unlikely that other parts of the country will be better served, so that on a population of 50,000,000 the estimated number of lunatics in asylums will probably not be greater than 50,000. Professor Low's guess is probably about eight times too high).

5. p. 128. 'Insulin, *salvarsan* . . . are all the work of the *synthetic* chemist.'

(Insulin has not yet been synthesised. It is at present prepared from animal tissues, and the prospect of its chemical synthesis seems, at present, remote).

6. p. 158. 'Some blind persons can distinguish colour by touch.'

If a scientific man undertakes scientific journalism, he must stick by the rules, one of which is that the facts must be presented as faithfully as he knows how. I think Professor Low can do better than this].

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Will subscribers kindly notify us of any change in address.





# STAGE and SCREEN

## THE ACTOR'S TECHNIQUE

WE all know by now that there is something more in painting than mere imitation. Even if we do not properly appreciate fine art, we should never criticize the difficult picture solely by drawing attention to its discrepancies with the sense-world of our experience. Those of us who, like myself, have no experienced eye for painting and can scarcely claim to have derived an intense vision from any art which is purely static and spatial, can yet receive at times glimmers of what a true appreciation should be; and it would be very different from the praise we accord to a good photograph. Consider this precept, quoted by Jacques Maritain from Maurice Denis: 'I want you to paint your people so that they look as though they were painted, subject to the laws of painting, and don't let them try to deceive my eye or my mind.' Probably that is excellent advice to the painter: I am not in a position to dogmatize. Certainly it is today a most valuable precept for the actor and playwright. Yet how often is this recognized? What is the most usual complaint levelled against an actor?—'He did not appear natural.' And the usual compliment: 'He didn't seem to be acting at all.' Is that all there is to it? So we concentrate on stage photography, and forget to have regard first to the *significance* (if there be any) of what the actor does, which exists in its own right apart from all questions of realism.

The drama is an art. The life we witness on the stage is not properly to be regarded as the same life we see about us day by day. Realistic pathos on the stage becomes quickly intolerable beyond a certain point, if not always. Realistic love (as in the close-ups of our films, for example) is often unfortunate. In the same way, any too acute representation of bodily pain is to be avoided. These are a few instances, but the rule holds good throughout. The actor's technique (and the playwright's and the producer's) is definitely artificial even when it appears most 'realistic'. For one thing, a good actor never loses control; all his effects are controlled,

coordinated, directed. If in speaking his lines his voice quivers with real, as opposed to artistic, emotion, the effect is dissipated. Therefore, recognizing this, let our advice to the young actor be: 'I want you to act so that you look as though you were acting, subject to the laws of acting, and don't try to deceive my eye or my mind.' True, the modern actor is often forced into aping reality by the modern play, and the modern play, we are told, is forced on us by the modern demand. Then, perhaps, we must be content to find the true artistic essences, rhythm and grace of movement, melody of speech, symbolic grouping and colour, and all such appeals to emotion, especially erotic emotion (which is the main substance of art), not in the high-brow intellectual problem play, but in the clash and jazz, the whirl and glamour and gyrations of the modern revue. That is where they are at present.

It is, of course, quite possible for dramatic or literary art to be so divorced from naturalism that it becomes meaningless. Mr. James Joyce's latest prose can scarcely, with any justice, demand—though it may receive—an assured place in English literature. There is, anyway, a limit beyond which such art cannot go with safety. It is, indeed, 'imitation,' and forgets the fact at its peril; but it is also 'expression.' The artist expresses himself whilst imitating things beyond himself. A photograph is artistically meaningless because a camera has no soul; there is thus no expression. A man who cries out in pain is not an

artist; there is no imitation. Only when these two, 'expression' and 'imitation,' are fused do we get an artistic product; that is 'creation.' (It would, however, be possible to argue that you get only one of these elements in music; and that Mr. Joyce's prose tends towards the musical, that is, the purely expressive). Now in any one art the need to emphasize 'expression' or 'imitation' varies from time to time. In Shakespeare's day, acting was probably highly 'symbolic,' and so Hamlet, addressing the players, emphasizes the need for naturalism. For any one rigid school of symbolic acting is bound to be short-lived, for the very reason that it must be intensely personal to the actor and not, beyond a certain point, imitative of any other actor, nor of ordinary life. Such rigid schools, if too long perpetuated, begin to appear 'artificial.' Then new forms of gesture, new grouping, new rhythms of voice, must be hammered out. Each actor must be his own artist. And each producer must consider the sincerity of each actor, correlating these and other effects, making a single harmony obedient to his conception of the work to be performed. I say 'his conception.' For he, too, is fusing his own personality with the play which he would bring to life, so that the final result may be a true act of creation.

But meanwhile we go on expecting the actor to be first and foremost a clever marionette going through the paces dictated by 'real life.' And the modern play is usually as thin and colourless as a photograph. It is, indeed, wonderfully life-like, with the sleepy life of human nature. But where is the drama whose purpose is to awake us to that other diviner life of art as different from ours as our life from sleep? The purpose of all high art is to awake. Compared with

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the great drama of the past, the modern realistic play presents but a sorry spectacle of somnambulism.

G. WILSON KNIGHT

#### EDEN PHILLPOTTERY

IF Ivy Lee himself had been on the job, Winnipeg's Little Theatre could not have been started off this season in a greater blaze of publicity. Columns of matter appeared in the local press urging its support until, it seemed, the Little Theatre movement must almost overshadow the Gold Standard, the Chinese situation, unemployment, and a Tong war that refused to materialize. On several occasions speakers addressed different service clubs and told them, no doubt greatly to their surprise, how important to the communal life the Little Theatre movement was.

The first offering was Eden Phillpott's *The Farmer's Wife*. Reasonably large and responsive audiences registered unaffected amusement at the presentation, and there was a feeling abroad that the Little Theatre was certainly delivering the goods now. Spectators were properly impressed by a programme note to the effect that *The Farmer's Wife* is a 'great comedy' and was first produced by the Birmingham Repertory Theatre in 1916 and was revived at the Court Theatre, London, in 1924. Let it be said at the outset that the director, John Craig, squeezed his materials very hard and extracted from them all the fun possible. The production was, in truth, very amusing. The cast was excellent. But one left it with a slight sense of having been cheated. The emotions were pleasurably tickled but the mind drew up a chair and went into defensive cogitation to decipher how the thing was brought about. And it came to the not unreasonable conclusion that *The Farmer's Wife*, amusing as it was, was less Devonshire life than Eden Phillpott's. The excuse for the play was Samuel Sweetland's desire to marry again. Around this simple matter numerous characters were brought in and made to revolve about a situation that, apparently, they had little interest in. We were asked to believe that Devonshire people are so incurably dunderheaded as never to know their own loves. Samuel Sweetland doesn't know Araminta loves him—although it was plain to the audience ten minutes after some considerate soul had shut off the gramophone. Sib-

**Such delicacy of flavour  
is not found in other teas**

# "SALADA" TEA

**'Fresh from the gardens'**

ley Sweetland, Samuel's daughter, doesn't know Richard Croker loves her—another fact plainly visible to everyone else, and Richard doesn't know that Petronell, another daughter, loves him.

Furthermore, we are seduced into the belief that Petronell can succumb to George Smerdon in the last act after evincing implacable dislike to him all evening, and that Samuel Sweetland didn't know he wanted to marry Araminta until three other women had refused his impassioned offers of marriage. Despite the fact that all this framework makes up an amusing evening it is none the less a very fragile framework and it is this about the play that deters one from swallowing it whole as directed. While admitting that such states of mind are not unknown, they are, nevertheless, too many of them crowded into one play for comfort. It is comedy, but very superficial comedy, very self-contained and arising less from direct observation and understanding of character than from a theatrical formula of honourable antiquity. Mr. Philpotts presents us with a view of an apple that might be a Devonshire apple, but we do not savour its flavour. Winston McQuillin carried the part of Samuel Sweetland admirably. In fact, there was hardly a weak member in the entire cast. But among the numerous programme notes we do think credit should have been given the artist who moulded Sweetland's rotund contours. At least a footnote, such as 'Sweetland's stomach by V. V. Murray'!

JOHN HURLEY

#### INSTRUCTION IN PRODUCING

THIS is another of the theatre books\* designed for the use of dramatic courses in schools and extension work. It is well planned and never loses sight of the youthful beginner with his need, not of course confined to youth, to know the reasons of the things he is asked to do; for example, an original treatment of make-up deals especially with the problem of turning young faces into old, with detailed practical instructions and very helpful illustrations.

A few well known plays are analyzed from the producer's point of view, and incidentally the author shows that he is not afraid to use the scissors; his production of *The Fool* dispenses with the whole of the second act, closing up the hiatus with a few lines of suture which entirely conceal, so he claims, the excision. But that does not improve one's already poor opinion of *The Fool*.

The book contains a mass of material that would be useful to persons who have to lecture, too often a futile occupation, on play producing; there are scores of pages of sound practical advice, notably the chapter on making a stage in the class-room, and other scores of pages containing little but involved and wordy platitudes. Mr. Campbell seems to be one of those exasperating people who prefer to use four words where one will do; still he has written a very useful volume.

R.K.H.

\*AMATEUR ACTING AND PLAY PRODUCING, by Wayne Campbell, with five original non-royalty one-act plays (Macmillans in Canada; pp. 346; \$3.50).

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